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INTRODUCTION

Although researchers have long been interested in the nature and importance of social relationships, thinking of such relationships as a form of capital is relatively new. Viewing networks of social ties as a form of capital asset provides a lens for examining how these ties can be invested in and drawn upon in ways that complement other capital assets available to individuals and communities. Recognition of the potential benefits of social capital may, in turn, have implications for the development of public policy and programs.

Access to, and the ability to make use of, valuable social connections are often necessary to achieve desired outcomes. For individuals and organizations, who one knows can matter for "getting by" or "getting ahead." The central idea is that one's network of social contacts may represent another form of capital resource, beyond physical, financial, and human capital, with important potential returns on investment. Different types of social connections may lend themselves to different benefits. The close ties to family and friends typical of "bonding" social capital may be particularly helpful for individuals who need intensive, daily support. The social ties of "bridging" social capital are often weaker, but they may offer a greater diversity of resources that can be potentially leveraged to provide new opportunities.

There is already a well-established field of social network analysis that predates current interest in social capital by several decades. The consideration of social networks as social capital, however, provides a qualitatively new approach to a disparate field of mostly atheoretical investigation that has been largely divorced from public policy development. By considering how social networks constitute an important social capital resource, new relevance and sense can be brought to social network research.

The concept of social capital allows for a consideration of social networks in instrumental terms. Most people do not think of the social ties they form as instrumental investments, in the way they may do with their savings and education (although there are some exceptions, such as those engaged in certain professions based on networking). But whether or not social relationships are invested in consciously and instrumentally, public policy researchers may nevertheless benefit from understanding how and why people and organizations do or do not invest their time and energy in social ties, when and how they attempt to draw benefits from them, and whether this makes a difference to desired outcomes.

In instrumental terms, the potential value of an individual or organization's social capital depends on the benefits they may be able to draw from their social connections. The same is true of human capital: the instrumental value of one's education or training depends on the flow of benefits it produces. The range of potential benefits that may flow from a person or group's network of social ties includes material goods and services, information, emotional support, reinforcement of positive behaviours, and service brokerage. Knowing that such support is available in an emergency, even if never called upon, may offer a healthy sense of predictability and security.

This is not to suggest that social capital represents some entirely unrecognized new resource to cure all that ails social policy. Often, it may only explain a moderate amount of variance in key outcomes, with several other factors being much more important. Moreover, more social capital does not always lead to better outcomes. As White, Spence, and Maxim argue in this volume, one's social ties may, through reinforcement and sanctions, promote successful educational attainment, but they can also have quite the opposite effect: in tightly knit families or communities where parents and other members have low educational attainment and aspirations, social ties may demote the pursuit of education. Nevertheless, social capital may often have a significant role to play for individuals and organizations, although it must be considered in relation to a number of other resources and factors that may make a difference in achieving particular goals and objectives.

A consideration of the important productive, sometimes destructive, effects of social capital may become highly useful for public policy purposes. At a minimum, adopting a social capital lens could provide policy makers with insights into the importance of social network ties (or lack thereof) for the well-being of individuals and groups. More broadly, social capital represents a useful tool for complementing other policy approaches and instruments (such as investment in the creation of human and financial capital) that cannot address by themselves the complexities of the modern world. It also highlights the ways in which the quality of the relationships developed between public service providers and service recipients may have a significant impact on the success of program delivery.

To investigate the potential of social capital as a public policy tool, the Policy Research Initiative launched an interdepartmental project to assess the potential role and contribution of social capital in the achievement of federal policy objectives. In the spring of 2004, the PRI and federal departmental partners commissioned a series of thematic policy studies. These federal partners include Canadian Heritage, Health Canada, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness Canada, Social Development Canada, and Veterans Affairs Canada. The resultant studies have been collected and published in this volume, which complements the other two final products of the PRI's social capital project: a final project report and a guide to measurement.

The Canadian experts commissioned to undertake the thematic studies were asked to develop policy briefs on issues where the concept of social capital might be usefully applied to areas of strategic concern to the federal government. Specifically, the studies' authors were asked to collect and assess evidence indicative of a link between the policy area of their study and network-based social capital, identify and highlight promising practices from current programs and initiatives where the use of a social capital perspective may play a role, and analyze the potential for future strategic research and policy development in the area.

Each chapter examines a different strategic subject where social capital may play an important role. Following the chapter, the departments that partnered with the PRI to support the study provide some reflections on the issues and challenges raised by the study authors.

In the first chapter, Maurice Lévesque looks at the influence of social capital on people's individual financial circumstances. Relying on a large body of work in the fields of employability and job progression and his own research findings, Lévesque presents arguments as to the importance of networks – the right types of networks – for escaping from poverty. Although it may seem obvious that having contacts is an asset when finding a job, improving one's career path or speeding up one's social mobility, Lévesque concedes that merely demonstrating that such a link exists is not enough in terms of providing effective strategies for fighting poverty. A closer examination of the mechanisms at work in processes to create and mobilize social capital shows how such capital is inextricably linked to other forms of capital (human, financial, and cultural), forming a pool of resources in which co-generation (reciprocal influence) dynamics are at play. Accordingly, public policy aimed at using the positive influence of social capital to help disadvantaged people could have a negative effect on the resource pool if the advantages associated with social capital action reduce the value of the other forms of capital. This is often the case with job entry programs aimed solely at employment insurance claimants and income security recipients. Associating them in this way places them in a group that is stigmatized on the employment front, with potential negative ramifications in terms of the value of their cultural capital. Lévesque provides a series of examples and suggests avenues for action to make optimum use of networking resources at different stages of development of the employment relationship, whether it is the job search, job entry, job retention, or job trajectory that enables people to overcome poverty.

In Chapter 2, Norah Keating, Jennifer Swindle, and Deborah Foster consider the role of social capital as a resource for aging well in Canada. They distinguish two important subsets of the social networks of older adults: support networks and care networks. Support networks made up of relatively close ties provide everyday tasks and services for seniors. In the face of long-term health problems or impaired functional status, older adults may become dependent on more intensive support from an even smaller and more intimate care network. While considerable evidence demonstrates the importance of the help received from care networks by frail older adults, government programs may benefit from a better understanding of the negative outcomes associated with dependence on care networks. For those frail seniors who have no choice but to accept extensive assistance from their closest family and friends, the various costs associated with this intense care may strain their closest relationships and drain them of the positive affect previously available – thus undermining the goal of aging well. Keating and her colleagues explore how these negative outcomes might be mitigated through government programs that reduce the pressures placed on care networks. The authors also note that comparatively little attention has been paid to the role of support networks or other, weaker social ties in supporting the goal of aging well. More research needs to be done on these relationships, and the various programs and services that may usefully facilitate such ties. In an appendix to their paper, the authors provide an overview of recent research demonstrating the considerable variation in both the network characteristics of Canadian seniors, and the levels of general support available in Canadian communities.

Jean Lock Kunz explores the role of social capital in the settlement and integration of immigrants to Canada in Chapter 3. Canada has the second highest proportion of foreign-born permanent residents in the world, and immigrants constitute 20 percent of the labour force. However, research demonstrates a decline in recent years in the economic well-being of recent immigrants. Might a greater focus on the role of social capital help governments respond to this situation? The initial results of the Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Canada (LSIC) reveal that family and friends (bonding social capital) are major sources of support for immigrants during the settlement process. Future waves to the LSIC will investigate whether the presence of more diverse social capital ties (bridging social capital) makes a difference for how newcomers get ahead in Canadian society. While Kunz notes that the bulk of government programs and funding to assist settlement and integration must concentrate on language, employment, housing, and social services, she also suggests that programs, such as Host, that look to build new social ties between hosts and newcomers should be valued for bringing these two groups together as a means to ensuring a successful integration process.

Chapter 4 turns to the issue of educational attainment in Aboriginal communities. Jerry White, Nicholas Spence, and Paul Maxim explore the role of social capital in this process by drawing lessons from Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. Their proposed model identifies four key elements that interact to influence the efficacy of social capital: existing levels of social capital, the effects of norms, cultural openness, and community capacity. Specifically, social capital seems to have more influence at set threshold points; low/high norms of educational attainment can reinforce low/high achievement; the degree of cultural openness can increase/decrease the links forged between communities and the institutions of society that influence attainment; and the socio-economic capacity of the community promotes/demotes the relevance or payoffs of educational attainment. White and his colleagues conclude that policy makers would benefit from considering the complexities of the various combinations of these four elements as they yield different results. Also, they underscore that social capital has only moderate explanatory power, and it exists in a context with other forms of capital (e.g., human and economic). Future avenues for research identified by the authors include a greater understanding of the four variables and the development of a generalized programming tool that enables users to maximize the positive effects of social capital.

In Chapter 5, Dietlind Stolle and Cesi Cruz explore the challenges posed by the civic (dis)engagement of Canadian youth. A review of evidence regarding youth participation in civic life finds, at best, a mixed picture of serious political disengagement combined with healthier but perhaps sporadic social engagement. After a discussion of potential explanations for, and consequences of, these trends, the authors explore a number of possibilities for public policy and programs addressing this situation. While some programs and initiatives, particularly those based in schools, have received extensive attention and evaluation, approaches based on networks of social ties have received comparatively little attention. Although the impact of family ties and peer group relationships is poorly understood, current research suggests that these relationships have particularly strong long-term effects on youth civic participation. Stolle and Cruz signal that future research in this area is urgently needed. The authors conclude with recommendations for policy makers to concentrate on the most beneficial forms of engagement and to target those groups of youth who are particularly disengaged.

In Chapter 6, Ray Corrado, Irwin Cohen, and Garth Davies explore the relationship between social capital and community crime prevention programs. Traditionally, crime prevention programs have focused on the relationships between the police and neighbourhoods. More recently, several crime prevention programs have taken a broader approach involving other community and government personnel, including teachers, health-care workers, housing officers, and other government officials. After reviewing how some of these recent programs have incorporated social capital dimensions into their designs, the authors review the considerable empirical evidence generated by Robert Sampson's Chicago study on the positive relationship between neighbourhood social capital and crime prevention. The authors conclude with recommendations for greater integrated, co-ordinated and multi-sectoral approaches to crime prevention programs that recognize the dynamics of local social capital.

Ralph Matthews and Rochelle Côté, in Chapter 7, examine the relevance of social capital for Aboriginal policing. Specifically, they focus on how the social capital ties between police officers and the reserve communities they service facilitate or hinder the efficacy of their police work. A recognition of the dynamics of social ties between police officers and Aboriginal community residents points to some of the inherent tensions and conflicting goals of Aboriginal policing. The authors suggest that appropriate involvement in community activities combined with a cultural awareness by police officers may help to develop trusting relationships, a precondition for successful policing, that is otherwise difficult to develop, because of a generalized community distrust of police based on historical experiences. A social capital lens may help to assess whether existing social relationships support the kinds of reciprocity and trust needed for effective policing and to provide an evaluation and monitoring tool to assess efforts to change negative situations.

Finally, in Chapter 8, Johanne Charbonneau, in collaboration with Jean-Guillaume Simard, examines how the different dynamics of networks of relationships formed between various community associations and with government partners may assist or undermine the achievement of specific community project objectives. She presents six case studies – three successful and three unsuccessful – from which she extrapolates lessons for how to structure successful networks, as well as lessons on how governments may play a useful role as a network facilitator and partner. She notes, in particular, that government representatives must be able to act autonomously and within the context of local dynamics. Top-down imposition of network structures and objectives by government representatives may work against successful community efforts.

SOCIAL CAPITAL, REDUCING POVERTY, AND PUBLIC POLICY

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Introduction

This paper addresses the issue of social capital and poverty from a public policy perspective. It is based on the firm conviction that effective policies and interventions must be supported not only by an awareness of the social factors at the root of certain phenomena, in this case poverty, but also by detailed knowledge of the precise mechanisms at play. Following this train of logic, it is not enough to know that the value of social capital may be inversely related to poverty, and thereby conclude that we have to increase the social capital of people living in poverty. On the contrary, we have to try to understand the concrete mechanisms whereby social capital may influence the financial situation of individuals. Similarly, social capital and other forms of capital must be treated as part of a stock of resources held by individuals, a stock that is not merely the sum of its components. Thus, increasing the value of an individual's social capital will not necessarily change his or her stock of resources if it means decreasing another, for instance cultural capital.

On this basis, the text is organized into six sections. First, it provides a few clarifications on the concept of capital and the way it is used here. This means that social network dynamics have to be presented with a focus on the importance of the concrete relations among the players involved. It also addresses the nature of the relationship between social capital and other forms of capital, to highlight the fact that these different resources do not interact in a linear fashion, but rather through co-generation. The next section addresses poverty, which is a multi-faceted phenomenon associated with many social factors, and delimits the very restricted framework within which it is addressed when inserted into an issue that connects it with the social capital of individuals.

This is followed by two sections. The first reviews the current knowledge about the impact of social capital on the targeted dimensions of the origins of poverty: labour market integration and employment retention and career paths. The second analyzes the concrete manner in which this influence can be felt. Another section addresses the place previously and currently held by social capital in public interventions intended for disadvantaged groups. Finally, the report presents some of the lessons learned from this study and sets out useful policy approaches.

Social Capital

This paper uses a network-based approach to social capital, based on a definition of social capital as a resource that stems from participation in certain social networks that possess specific characteristics which open up access to resources of varying value (Lévesque and White, 1999). This definition fits into a tradition of understanding social capital that has been well established in the field of social network analysis (Lin, 2001; Burt, 1997, 2000) and in a major stream of sociology represented by the work of Pierre Bourdieu (1980a, 1986).

To address social capital from this point of view, it is necessary to make a detour through a review of social networks so we can determine more clearly what this notion involves, and thereby identify the mechanisms that can help form social capital or, in some cases, destroy it. While there are certainly different variations on the definition of social networks, there is agreement that they are characterized by "a finite set or sets of actors and the relation or relations defined on them"(Wasserman and Faust, 1994: 20). This definition brings two key dimensions to the understanding of social networks: the presence of actors and the presence of relations that link them directly or indirectly. In fact, the relations that create the network give it its structure, while the actors imbue these networks with their own resources and characteristics. By this definition, social networks present as structures that create opportunities and constraints in terms of access to resources and explain, at least in part, any patterns in observed behaviours. From this point of view, addressing the evolution of social networks and the social capital they produce will require studying both their structure and the dynamics of their relations or, more specifically, the exchanges that result from them.

These few details about the nature and dynamics of social networks are not only of academic interest. From a policy point of view, it is important to have a full understanding of network dynamics if one wants to develop a policy intervention with real potential. For instance, interventions aimed only at transforming the network structure (e.g., the number of contacts) may have little or no impact if the new contacts do not yield access to new resources, are redundant, or are not used effectively to establish exchanges useful for achieving a particular goal. Similarly, successfully intervening to bring about a more optimal use of existing relations hinges on the nature of the resources that might be obtained through these relations. For instance, for unemployed individuals, it may be more effective to turn for assistance to their relations with people who are well integrated into the labour market (even if the number of such relations is limited) rather than banking on a large number of relations with people who have been unemployed for a long time. This example may appear trivial, but as we see later in the paper, a significant number of interventions with poor people involve connecting them with each other.

The value of social capital cannot be assessed merely from looking at the volume of links or contacts, because all of these contacts do not have the same "value" (Degenne and Forsé, 1994; Coleman, 1990). This then raises the question as to which links might be useful and which ones are not, and we also have to make a clear distinction between the network of links that are used and those that are "usable." In the first case, we are talking about more visible links, including family, friends, and colleagues, which are regularly used in some fashion or other. These immediately visible links are first-degree links (i.e., there is a direct relationships between an individual [the ego] and their contact). At the same time, for access to certain resources, for instance when looking for work, it is possible that the value of a link is a function of the social network in which the contact is embedded (Degenne and Forsé, 1994; Lemieux, 2000; Lemieux and Ouimet, 2004). A neighbour's ability to help with the job search may be related to his or her being part of the labour market, and his or her own network provides useful information that can be passed on. The presence – and in some situations the importance – of such second-degree links has prompted some researchers to suggest that to have a better idea of the resources that can be accessed through social networks, it is important to consider all the potential resources contained in a social network, that is, all of the potentially usable links, rather than only the regularly-used first-degree links (Lemieux, 2000; Montgomery, 1992). It is thus in considering all of these links that one may determine the value of the social capital available to an individual.

Finally, to understand fully the mechanisms for making social capital into a "useful" resource, another dimension needs to be introduced, one that links social capital to other forms of capital. These other forms include financial capital and cultural capital. While financial capital does not require a great deal of explanation, cultural capital[1] may be defined as all the provisions and knowledge acquired by agents, which they may or may not use in any given domain (Bourdieu, 1979, 1980b, 1986). The fundamental characteristic of these resources as a form of capital is their capacity to be converted into another form of capital (Bourdieu, 1986). For instance, cultural capital can be converted into financial capital through participation in the labour market. Similarly, the social capital held by individuals can develop further through participation in the labour market. By looking at the process from the point of view of social capital, one could say that it forms a resource that facilitates the actualization of cultural capital by fostering labour market integration, thereby increasing the value of financial capital. Similarly, social capital may directly promote the development of financial capital, for instance through the debt it represents when considered at the level of the job seeker or through the business opportunities it can provide to the heads of companies.

Referring to these different forms of resources by grouping them under the heading of capital implies that they are considered as a specific form of resource, one which is not simply given (unlike, for instance, physiological resources determined by genetics), but rather is the product of investment of resources in a market (the financial or labour market, the knowledge market, or the social relations market). This also implies that these different resources form a stock – the capital stock that is available to individuals through conversion from one form to another.

The idea of capital stock and the phenomenon of converting different forms of capital make it impossible to treat the relation between social capital and poverty as a linear relationship (social capital => poverty or "wealth"). One must instead consider all of the strategies and actions that individuals use (in a given context) for the development of their capital stock, of which social capital is but one dimension. Far from being a linear relationship, it becomes a situation in which effects are augmented by the complementary dynamics of different forms of capital, a process in which social capital often plays an important role. In terms of policies and interventions, this means guiding attention toward a set of actions that target these three types of resources at once, bearing in mind that they influence one another through co-generation. In this regard, working on only one of them may be less effective than working on all of them. Similarly, it is important to be aware that any measure applied to one dimension (e.g., social capital) may have a detrimental impact on another. This generally raises questions about ways of converting one form into another. For instance, what are the necessary conditions for optimal use of cultural capital or social capital? We address this issue below by analyzing the means through which social capital can affect career paths. But first, to situate the approach properly, it is important to say a few words about the issue of poverty, as it is addressed in this paper.

The Issue of Poverty

The notion of "poverty" can cover several realities, as reflected in the numerous debates about its "measurement" (Langlois et al., 2000; Sarlo, 1998). In some cases, the notion of "economic" poverty has been expanded to include a series of aspects that can be associated with it, such as different forms of deficit in education or access to cultural resources. When looked at from a strictly financial point of view, other than the issue of the state of the labour market, situations of poverty are strongly affected by the institutional framework in which they operate. For instance, fiscal and social policies may contribute to increasing or reducing individuals' disposable income. Similarly, the different statutes and regulations that structure the labour market and labour relations can also have an impact on individuals' ability to draw a certain level of income. This refers to minimum wage legislation, of course, but also to different rules that facilitate or encourage "atypical" jobs (precarious employment, part-time work, determinate jobs, etc.) or unionization.

Thus, in this text, poverty is addressed from a well-delimited context, and applied only to aspects that may be directly associated with the issue of available social capital or that which is held by individuals.[2] This choice implies the exclusion from consideration of those institutional mechanisms that can affect the financial situation of individuals – but over which they have very little influence as individuals – such as the institutional transfers to individuals who are expected to have jobs (for instance through income security or employment insurance programs). Similarly, by not taking into account these institutional aspects, certain groups that might be subject to poverty are excluded from consideration. For example, it excludes those older individuals whose poverty situation is associated with institutional arrangements that define a certain level of financial transfer to these individuals, with institutional structures, with the condition of the labour market in which they spent their working life, and with the means through which they were integrated into the labour market. Following this same train of thought, people who are not expected to participate in the labour market, regardless of the reason, must also be excluded.[3]

Within this highly delimited framework, the poverty we are dealing with can be traced to a deficit of financial resources associated with two dimensions: the absence of work, which cuts off access to income, and the "economic" quality of the jobs held. It is understood that some people, even though they may have a job, cannot climb out of poverty because their salaries are too low, because of the on-again/off-again nature of the jobs that result in frequent departures from the labour market and thereby restrict the opportunities for earnings, because of part-time work where the hours do not provide access to enough income, or, as is often the case, because of a combination of these various factors.

From the point of view of policies and social capital, it is important to understand fully these different modes of poverty since they involve differing targets for intervention and the use of social capital. For instance, useful strategies for individuals who are completely cut off from the labour market for an extended period may be different from those for individuals who, while they hold a precarious job, have more or less solid links that will help them reintegrate into the labour market. It is important to distinguish between the ability to integrate into the labour market (make connections with it) and the ability to navigate inside the market to improve one's financial situation.

Social Capital and Poverty, What We Know About Them

This definition of poverty leads into an assessment of the link between social capital and poverty from two points of view: the search for employment and career paths. The first is connected to labour market integration and access to a source of income that is hopefully stable and sufficient. The second is more complex, because it implies both the dimension of employment retention and career paths. It is understood that many people become integrated into the labour market through economically weak jobs; for these people, the issue or challenge is to move toward better-quality jobs. This section involves a brief overview of the knowledge regarding the links between social capital, looked at from the point of view of social networks, and these two dimensions of labour market integration and employment retention.

Social Capital and Access to Jobs

Much knowledge has been generated in this area, particularly since the pioneering work of Mark Granovetter (1973, 1974), which showed that finding work is much easier when social networks are used. More specifically, this research helped show that of all formal and informal job search methods, the use of social networks appears to be the most effective. Formal approaches to finding work involve the use of specialized agencies, reading advertised job offers, etc., while informal approaches involve social networks as the means of transmitting information about job availabilities (Marsden and Gorman, 2001). Research has shown that between 35 and 55 percent of people get their jobs through these informal mechanisms (Flap and Boxman, 2001). In fact, most research concludes that the use of social networks is the main method used to get a job and that, even when it is not used by a majority of people, it outranks every one of the formal mechanisms considered.

This having been said, the work of Granovetter, like that of his successors, has generally targeted populations that were relatively well equipped in terms of their ability to find work, mainly because they had a relatively high cultural capital, such as the professionals studied by Granovetter (1974). There is far less research involving the groups that are more vulnerable in terms of employment, but their conclusions are consistent in that the use of social networks, and the resources they involve, facilitate access to employment for these particular groups. In the United States, it was found that the presence of people with good labour market connections in the social networks of single-mother families who are part of the income security system was more important to their integration into the labour force than having resources that could ensure child care, including resources within the family network (Parish et al., 1991). Similarly, another study found that having access to a network that includes contacts that are closely connected to the labour market improves the effectiveness of integration programs for people in the income security system (Schneider, 1997). One of the few surveys conducted in this area among long-term unemployed people found that the period of unemployment was shorter for people with better social capital (measured, among other things, through the contacts' social positions) (Sprengers et al., 1988).

In Canada, a study comparing two groups of long-term social assistance beneficiaries – those who left the system after 24 months of continuous adherence and those who did not – showed that the key factor distinguishing the two groups was that those who exit have a greater wealth of social capital (Lévesque and White, 2001). In addition, subsequent analyses of the specific means used by these people to discontinue social assistance showed that most of them used their social network as an effective tool in the process (Lévesque and White, 2002).

While there may be less information about populations that are less well equipped with resources that provide access to jobs than about those that are better equipped in this regard, based on the strength of the contribution of social capital for the latter and existing studies on the former, one can conclude that social capital is an important resource for the former in terms of finding work. Moreover, the mechanisms involved in the contribution of social capital to finding work, the subject of the next section, show that there is no reason to believe that they can only work for the better-equipped populations, even though the resources used may have a different value.

Social Capital, Employment Retention, and Career Path

Information about the impact of social capital on career paths is another aspect that should be addressed to highlight the link between social capital and poverty. If social capital can help with finding a job, perhaps it can also help with job retention, which is essential to financial security.

It has been well established that social capital helps with upward career mobility for employees in higher-level occupations. A number of studies have shown that executives whose social networks are well stocked in terms of social capital[1] have a better chance of being promoted quickly (Burt, 1995; Poldony and Baron, 1997). Similarly, it has been determined that social capital holdings can help with career advancement among research teams (Gabbay and Zuckerman, 1998), and make a specific and positive contribution to executives' salaries (Boxman et al., 1991; Meyerson, 1994) and to getting these types of jobs (Flap and Boxman, 1999). From a somewhat different angle, it has also been shown that access to social capital facilitates the development of financial capital among entrepreneurs (Gabbay, 1997).

As with access to jobs, there is an impressive amount of research showing that social capital is a useful resource for individuals' careers. This having been said, this information pertains to specific career categories (e.g., executives, professionals, entrepreneurs). Other than the work of Erickson (1996, 2001), which covers lower-skilled workers such as security guards, and the work of Forsé (1997), which looked at a representative sample of the French population, to date there has been little research into the usefulness of social networks or social capital in the career paths of groups that are not well or not at all integrated into the labour market or that live in poverty. However, a study conducted in Quebec of individuals who experienced poverty situations showed that social networks seem to exert a certain influence on these paths (Malenfant et al., 2004). In general, for the more disadvantaged groups, the information on the direct connection between career paths, the ability to remain in and move through the labour market (and hence the possibility of achieving a certain degree of financial security) and social capital is more limited.

Of course, there is always another source, a more theoretical dimension, to exploring the link between individuals' social capital and their social paths. Studies on social mobility, which is to say moving to a higher social status from one that was "inherited" at birth, when done through analyses of social networks, can shed more light on this aspect. Since social mobility is above all dependent on the acquisition of a social status that stems from the individual's occupation, it could be considered that where there is social mobility, career integration will be of a certain quality.

In this regard, the work of Nan Lin and his many colleagues has made a tremendous contribution. By looking at the social factors that affect social mobility, the most traditional of which are social origin and education, they showed that the use of social networks, in particular of contacts having a high social status, makes a specific contribution (i.e., by controlling for the impact of social origin and education) to upward mobility (Lin, Vaughn and Ensel, 1981; Lin, Ensel, and Vaughn 1981). These findings were confirmed by several subsequent studies conducted in very different contexts and among different populations (Campbell et al., 1986; Flap and De Graaf, 1986; Flap and Boxman, 2001; Marsden and Hurlbert, 1988; Lai et al., 1998; Lin and Dumin, 1986). There is a detailed overview of these analyses, with a focus on the sometimes-complex mechanisms at play, in Lin (1999). The fundamental social mechanism underlying this impact of social networks on social mobility would be that, under certain conditions, they help create links among social groups of different standings, to the benefit of the lower status ones (Lin, 1990).

On the other hand, there are other studies that qualify the impact of this proposition. Forsé (1997) looked at representative data on the whole French population and determined that the link between social capital, social networks, and social mobility was not systematic. His analyses showed that this link was tenuous with regard to intergenerational social mobility, even though social capital can have a significant impact on the chances of finding a job and the position of that job in the hierarchy of occupations. These deviations, which do not discredit the general proposition, may be due to different factors (in particular questions of a more methodological nature), and may also reflect the existence of more or less institutionalized mechanisms that affect career paths. For instance, in Germany the apprenticeship system directly connects young people to the labour market, which can reduce the impact of social capital. Similarly, in a country like Japan close relations between the educational system and businesses provide a means of communication between the supply of and demand for work, which makes the use of social capital a less important factor in creating this connection (Degenne and Forsé, 1994).

Information on the potential influence of social capital on social mobility shows that this influence certainly seems to exist. While this is not a concrete analysis of the use of social capital in employment retention and career paths for more disadvantaged groups, it is likely that it is possible, if not probable, that this link exists.

Social Capital and Jobs: The Mechanisms Involved

The previous section briefly outlined the information currently available on the usefulness of social capital for finding work, for professional career paths, and for social mobility. From the policy point of view, this information is interesting inasmuch as it helps identify the targets for intervention. This having been said, merely demonstrating the existence of a positive relation between the value of social capital and professional standing does not automatically provide a means of intervention. As previously indicated, effective interventions can only be developed if they are based on solid information about the mechanisms involved in the production of the observed effects. In this regard, this section aims to provide guideposts for identifying the means or mechanisms whereby social capital can foster access to jobs and career advancement.

First, it is important to remember that there are many similarities between finding a first job with an employer and moving through the company toward better jobs. In both cases, the employer gets to choose whether to hire outside the company or to pick among existing employees.[5] This is why, even if both approaches have their own characteristics, the way in which a job connection is made says a lot about both the process for getting a job and the means of career advancement.

While there may be a tendency toward abstraction, for instance when the focus is entirely on the workforce integration of individuals outside the labour market, the creation of an employment link involves a meeting between two parties, the employer and the job seeker, and is done under certain conditions. Among these conditions, one often emphasizes the training and experience of potential employees as the factors that facilitate the creation of a job link. Having "good training" and "a certain amount of work experience" puts job seekers in a better position for finding a job, creating an employment link, and maintaining the link. Furthermore, the value of a person's skill set is a function of the skills sought on the labour market, and is therefore based on employers' requirements. From this point of view, the ideal situation would be to make a perfect match between employers' requirements and job seekers' skills. To a large extent, looking at the usefulness of social capital in getting a job means looking at the way it can – or cannot – intervene in facilitating this meeting between the two parties.

The idealistic vision described above is based on the postulate that job seekers are "perfectly" informed about job availabilities, the equivalent assumption being made on the employer's side. Several studies that have empirically examined job searching have raised doubts about this assumption of well-informed demand (Flap and Boxman, 2001). Not all job search strategies are equally effective. As indicated above, of the different methods that might be used to find a job, a distinction has to be made between formal approaches and the informal approaches that depend on the use of social networks and are often the more effective (Marsden and Gorman, 2001; Flap and Boxman, 2001).

On the employers' side, the means pursed to hire personnel are various, and they are not all equally effective. Most of the concrete research into the mechanisms used by employers to fill their labour force requirements distinguishes between two stages in the process leading up to the hiring. The first one pertains to recruitment, where employers try to get access to a large pool of individuals who might be able to meet their requirements (Marsden, 2001). Recruitment aims to identify a limited number of individuals who will then be subjected to further selection. This second stage aims to identify the best possible candidates based on information provided by the candidate directly as well as any other knowledge that the company can or must compile. Different tests and interviews are used, and employers will consult references provided by the candidates as well as other personal or business contacts who know the applicant (Marsden, 2001).

For employers, just as for job-seekers, there are different means for going through these stages. For instance, Marsden and Campbell (1990) have shown that those businesses with the most bureaucratized hiring procedures, which are also generally the largest ones, tend to use direct soliciting and placement services, whereas other businesses make greater use of job ads and social networks. This having been said, regardless of the type of business, social networks remain the primary recruitment method, followed by direct applications, agencies and ads. Marsden (2001) ran a comparable survey on a representative sample of American companies and found similar results, though he also uncovered some rather significant differences depending on the job category. Companies tend to use more formal methods for their skilled jobs. In terms of the effectiveness of one method over another, Fernandez and Castilla (2001) found that informal recruitment methods could be 66 percent more effective and up to $1,500 cheaper per job at the selection stage. These findings suggest that, just as individuals use their social networks to "connect" with the labour market, companies use the same source to "connect" with the available labour force.[6]

Social capital plays a different part at every stage leading up to the final hiring. In terms of the job opportunities, social networks help create concrete links between job supply and demand through the information they can pass on about available jobs. Contrary to suggestions made in some approaches that focus entirely on human capital, the match between supply and demand does not happen by magic, for it depends on social mechanisms to make it possible, including the dissemination of information (Montgomery, 1992). There are some social institutions whose main goal is to facilitate this match, but studies have shown that social networks are generally more effective in this regard, on both the job demand and supply sides.

Thus, at a first level, one could say that social capital plays a part in labour market integration by facilitating the connection between employers and job seekers. This dimension is tied to the ability of social capital to help define the value of cultural capital in that it facilitates the transformation of knowledge and skills held by an individual into a "product" that can be purchased on the labour market. This situation has a significant impact on certain groups. Individuals who are cut off from the regular labour market for a long period of time or those who do not have access to a social network that can help them connect with this market are generally at a disadvantage. It is in this sense, among others, that one can talk about inequalities in the distribution of social capital among the different social groups (Lin, 2000). It should be mentioned that this situation is particularly critical for those recent immigrants who belong to minorities that have not integrated into every part of the labour market, because both collectively and individually, they have very little access to this means of labour market integration.

A few words should be said about the mechanisms, especially in unionized sectors, that call for specific means of hiring and promotion, such as job postings. Officially, these mechanisms should reduce the importance of social capital by leaving more room for formal mechanisms, as opposed to the informal ones. While there does not appear to be a great deal of research in this area, the assumption could be made that these mechanisms do not fully block the influence of social capital, because they are easy to circumvent (and often are circumvented), and they still involve the transmitting of information which may occur through social networks.

A second way in which social capital intervenes in the job match is related to its potential impact on the value of cultural capital. To illustrate this phenomenon, first consider that for which employers are looking during the recruitment and selection processes. These two processes involve the formulation of a series of criteria that can guide the hiring of personnel. These criteria generally refer to training (general or specific to the job in question) and experience, which may also be general or related to the job sector. Erickson (2001) interviewed employers about the criteria they used in hiring for different job categories, and compared these criteria with the characteristics of the people who were hired. She found significant gaps between the profiles sought and those of the people who were hired. This illustrates that the processes that end with the hiring, while perhaps clearly outlined, and even in some cases bureaucratized, do not involve the mechanical application of predefined criteria. Rather, they are processes that undergo relatively complex social dynamics that, under certain conditions, may adapt the job offer to the available supply. This highlights the fact that individuals' "objective" skills are not the only things at play, but that other mechanisms may intervene in the match between the demand for and supply of work.

This brings us back to the second method, in which social capital comes into play in setting up the employment connection. Other than fostering a connection between supply and demand, social capital also serves as a guarantee, which adds value to the cultural capital held by individuals (Bourdieu, 1980a, 1986). Being referred by someone, being part of the "circle," accentuates the "market" value of the individual who can get the referral, by attributing to that individual the value (real or perceived) of the reference providing the guarantee. This added value is that much greater when the individual making the reference has a high social standing, a standing that adds credibility to the reference because of the importance of the person making the referral. The current practice of asking for letters of recommendation during the hiring process is based on this principle. While the positive side of this approach is clear, it does have a negative side. For instance, an individual who can only provide referrals from subsidized jobs or training programs for unemployed people will be at a disadvantage compared to regular labour market employees. From this point of view, work experiences acquired outside the regular labour market may have a negative aspect that will penalize the individuals. Wilensky (1992) showed that individuals who participated in American income security programs carried a stigma whose negative value often overrode the positive side of skills development and experience acquired through such programs.

Moreover, while this dimension may not be as significant for our purposes, it should be noted that for some jobs, a person's social capital might carry its own value from the employer's point of view. In this case, in addition to their cultural capital, the value of their work is also a function of their own social capital, which the employer may hope to get access to by hiring the holder. While this intrinsic value of social capital may often be found in professional and executive positions (for instance in the public relations sector, political staff in employer and employee associations, and government organizations), it can also be in demand in some of the less qualified sectors. For instance, Erickson (2001) showed that in Toronto's security industry, social capital resources are a selection criterion for executives, but also for salespeople and, to a lesser degree, for technicians and installers. This dimension of the intrinsic value of social capital, which could be called the market value of social capital, is generally not mentioned and tends to be overshadowed by its usefulness in finding a job (Erickson, 2001). Of course, this is still a significant source of social inequality inasmuch as this form of resource is not accessible to everyone in the same manner, and it definitely has a clear value.

Thus, it is through these different means that social capital can play a part in facilitating labour market integration and job retention, as well as positive career paths. It is important to consider these different means inasmuch as the optimal activation of social capital can vary depending on the positions of individuals in regard to the labour market and its requirements. An unemployed individual trying to find a job must rely on a different use of social capital than someone who already has one and is looking to get ahead. Similarly, social capital can play a different role in defining the value of cultural capital for an individual who is weaker in this regard, compared with an individual endowed with certificates and work experience.

Social Networks YES, but Some Ties Are More Important than Others

As we have just seen, there are many ways in which social capital can affect careers, and the links that make up the social networks can have different weights.

Since the Granovetter (1974) studies, there has been a tendency to focus on the "strength of weak ties." His research revealed that weak links in social networks had been more useful than strong links in securing jobs among the professionals he studied.[7] Essentially, this strength of weak links could be explained by the fact that, in general, social networks are based on the principle of homophilia, which is to say they are relatively homogeneous in terms of social status. In other words, the social networks for blue-collar workers mainly consists of others of a similar status; the same is true for professionals, and, unfortunately, for individuals from disadvantaged groups. The strength of weak lies in the fact that they are more likely than strong ties to facilitate access to different social status groups, forming bridges among social groups. A good example is the workplace, which often includes people of different social standings. The link with a supervisor or manager (a weak link), may open access to the latter's resources (in terms of information, referrals, etc.) for low-skilled or unskilled workers.

Studies into the validity of this theory of weak ties have shown that, although it may be valid in most cases, there are several exceptions. Langlois (1977) showed that the importance of strong/weak links varies with the person's age. Professional relations tend to increase with age, increased work experience, and the development of professional networks. Young people who are facing the prospect of a first job find that family members (strong ties) often play a very important role, especially among the lower- to middle-class groups (Degenne and Forsé, 1994). Similarly, the importance of strong/weak links varies based on social origin. Strong ties tend to be used more by disadvantaged groups in finding a job (Forsé, 1997; Lin, 1999), but they can also be very important among very high-level staff (Meyerson, 1994; Boxman et al., 1991).[8] There is also the impact of weak ties to consider, which can only be felt if they provide access to information that is actually useful to the individual (Granovetter, 1982). This usefulness is, however, unequally distributed among social groups, since people with lower levels of education or who are less qualified are not always in a position to use the resources provided by any weak ties they might have.

When looked at from the point of view of the nature of the ties, these variations in the observations about the dynamics between social networks and work led to an adjustment in the theory in terms of placing less emphasis on the nature of the tie as such, and attaching more importance to the characteristics of the resource obtained through the tie (Lin, 1990). From this point of view, it is not important whether a tie is weak or strong, only whether it leads to resources with a certain value. Weak ties remain the most important ones in terms of job search, but with some groups, strong ties can also play this role if the nature of the resources reached is taken into consideration.

Moreover, some researchers have suggested that, when assessing the contribution of social networks in the search for work and improved social standing, it would be best not to take into account only those ties that are actually used to get a job but also all the potential resources contained in the network, which is to say all the ties that make up the network (Lévesque and White, 2001; Montgomery, 1992). There are two reasons for this. The first one has to do with the fact that people who are without work or have been cut off from the labour market for an extended period still have a certain amount of social capital, which might not be revealed if it were measured only through the contacts that were used in the past to find work. The second one is that social networks constitute a reservoir of potential resources that is not always (in fact seldom) fully used. Many people have network resources that they will only use as a last resort or not at all. Thus, Lévesque and White (2002) have shown that long-term beneficiaries who have gotten off social assistance by finding a job that they got by using their social networks had known the contact who helped them for some time, but without having used that contact for a long time. These results illustrate that network resources are not limited to those that are actually used, but can be better appreciated if looked at from the point of view of potentially usable resources.

There is another lesson to be learned from this finding, which has to do with the use of resources in the social networks. Just as not all individuals make optimal use of their financial resources or cultural capital, social capital is not always fully used. There may be many reasons for this, ranging from a lack of information to a shortage of skills. This is a relatively unexplored area, so it is difficult to generalize. Much more research and testing would be warranted in this area.

Moreover, while all ties may have potentially usable resources – though it should be noted that weak ties are more often the ones that will pay off in terms of providing useful labour market or social standing resources – not all ties lead to useful resources from this point of view. The most useful ones generally have two features: a higher social standing than the person using it and close links with the labour market. These two aspects are fundamental to policies on interventions aimed at reducing poverty. Developing the social capital of people living in poverty means putting them in touch with groups or individuals who have resources that are recognized in the labour market. It also means that increasing the social network of these people through contacts with the others with the same status may not be an optimal solution in terms of developing the value of their social capital.[9]

Finally, it is important to remember the dynamic of co-generation that was presented at the beginning of this paper between the different forms of capital, which is the fundamental dynamic in terms of poverty since it is the one that influences capital holdings.[10] Interventions that target only one form of capital may have a negative impact on the overall capital stock if it also reduces the value of another form of capital. For instance, trying to develop the social capital of unemployed people or people on social assistance by integrating them into job search skills development programs may have a negative impact on the value of their cultural capital by bringing them together with a group that is stigmatized in the job market. It is important to remember that the three forms of capital interact with one another, which means that these situations warrant a careful analysis.

Social Capital, Jobs, and Public Policies

So far, the main interventions targeting individuals living in situations of poverty and receiving some form of income support have identified two goals. The first is to give them more encouragement to reintegrate into the labour market, either through different financial incentives associated with more or less parallel labour markets or through different disincentives (penalties, reduced payments, etc.). The other goal, which has been tested to a greater extent, is aimed at ensuring greater employability through measures designed to increase the value of their human capital and their job skills, and to equip them better for finding work.[11] Sometimes these interventions are aimed at the whole income security or unemployment insurance clientele, sometimes only at sub-groups that may be considered more "vulnerable" or more "at risk" of becoming long-term recipients, such as single mothers and youth. Some programs have tried to be more innovative by targeting more than those who receive income support, reaching out to all people living in situations of poverty.[12] These initiatives are well known and have been extensively evaluated. Overall, their success appears to be limited.

From the point of view of social capital, these interventions, especially those aimed at integrating individuals into a business, may (and often do) have an impact on social networks by creating a link between the individual and the labour market (employer or colleagues). Thus, they change the structure of the network by increasing its size. This having been said, these changes are often fleeting and do not always lead to usable links. There are a few reasons for this. Holding a subsidized job or being in a program often saddles these people with a label that does not help them in terms of integrating into an organization through the usual or "normal" integration process. They tend to see themselves, or to be seen by others, as being different from regular employees. Moreover, these integration programs are generally short term, which reduces the chances of creating ties. Finally, employers who use subsidized employment are not always motivated to ensure long-term employment or even to provide bridges to other businesses when the subsidies run out. People who have participated in such programs often indicate in interviews that they generally ended up with rather negative memories of the experience and that they would be more interested in distancing themselves from them rather than using them for their career paths (Malenfant et al., 2004; White and Lévesque, 2000). Some even indicated that they hide their involvement in such programs from potential employers for fear of being associated with social assistance beneficiaries and their negative image. While the potential is there, and while some social capital may be created, the constraints under which these ties develop mean that they are not always, if ever, used.

While the interventions we refer to have traditionally been silent with respect to social capital, there is something to be learned from the few initiatives that explicitly address the concept of social capital in programs aimed at helping to integrate employment insurance and social assistance beneficiaries into the labour market. The Community Employment Innovation Project[11] (CEIP), which was launched in 1999, gives some of these people an opportunity to participate in social economy jobs developed by committees set up under this program in different Cape Breton communities. In addition to the usual goals of developing employability and human capital, this project explicitly aims to improve the social capital of the participants and "communities" involved.

For the communities, this production of social capital would come from their involvement in the program itself. This presumes that they will develop the social economy projects, and that they will be partly responsible for funding these projects, while being able to count on the free labour force provided by CEIP participants. The community involvement required to develop these social economy projects would contribute to the development of the social capital in these communities. As for the production of social capital for the participants, the documents describing the project indicate that this depends on the following:

> Participants who work together may develop stronger peer support networks. Project participation also brings participants into contact with both project-sponsoring organizations and with those who benefit from the activities undertaken by the projects. This gives participants a chance to develop stronger social networks both within and outside their immediate local community; and stronger networks can provide individuals with more support in times of difficulty and help open doors to employment and other opportunities (Greenwood, 2003: S-3).

Thus, the strategy has a secondary goal of developing the social capital of participants in a program for developing employability. This said, no concrete action seems to have been planned to achieve this goal. It is expected that the value added to the social capital of these individuals (if any is generated) must enable them to integrate better into the labour market after a project in which participation is generally limited to three years. The CEIP should continue until 2008 and, to date, there does not appear to be any evaluation results on the impact of the job integration plan following participation or on social capital. Under these circumstances, it is difficult to draw any conclusions on the concrete impact of such a project.

However, it is clear that, according to the available information, in this case innovation clearly lies more in the introduction of social capital in the proposal that supports the intervention than in the practices. With regard to other interventions of this type that do not mention the notion of social capital, this one does not appear to have introduced anything new in terms of activities. Moreover, it includes many of the limitations that policies have come up against in terms of interventions against poverty while taking social capital into consideration, as we will see in the next section.

A Few Policy Directions

In this section, we try to draw lessons from what has just been presented, focusing on what it all means for policies. Different mechanisms and means involved in the creation of a situation where social capital influences poverty have been identified, and it is these dimensions that we will address and connect with policy options.

The Dynamics Among The Different Forms of Capital

We have seen that the different forms of capital (cultural, social, financial) are closely interconnected in a co-generation relationship involving the conversion of one form into another. In terms of policies, this dynamic is relevant in at least two regards. The first is that, if we consider that reducing poverty is tied to an increase in the capital held by individuals, it does not make sense to target an intervention at only one form of capital. While we may be able to target one of these forms as the gateway, looking at it exclusively may not be the optimal solution.

Furthermore, it should be noted that even if the financial dimension is the most visible in relation to poverty, we too often tend to treat it as a dependent variable that we try to influence by manipulating other aspects that help create situations of poverty. Thus, we forget that, just as economic capital produces economic capital, poverty tends to produce poverty. One main obstacle that people face when trying to escape poverty is poverty itself, which restricts their universe of opportunities, particularly in terms of job searching (McAll, 1996). From this point of view, policies designed to encourage people outside the market to integrate into the market through financial disincentives carry potentially significant detrimental effects.

The second way in which the co-generation dynamic is important has to do with the idea that interventions on one form may have a negative impact on another. A central dilemma in policy making is finding a way to foster the development of cultural and social capital without having a backlash from the stigma associated with these programs and the status of being an assistance recipient.

The Development of Social Capital and Its Use

If, as with all forms of capital, social capital requires an investment on the part of the individual in order to develop, there is no a priori reason to believe that this investment has to be entirely deliberate. Social contacts most often develop in a contingent manner, through more or less significant opportunities. This is why social capital "naturally" gets distributed unequally among social groups, homophilia leading the players to develop contacts first within their own social group. Hence, the structure of opportunities "inherited" at birth plays a very important part. Moreover, we have seen that some of the value of social capital that people hold is attributable to second-degree links (i.e., connections they may have through their contacts' contacts). Again, the structure of opportunities matters and rational and deliberate investment is probably the exception.

Of course, this does not rule out the importance of individuals' investments in the production of their social capital. However, failure to invest consciously does not necessarily mean that no investment occurred, since this may take different forms. First, we all know people who cultivate their contacts (i.e., consciously develop their networks of contacts, generally with clear career or economic goals). Moreover, effective investment in social capital can stem from decisions that are related to other goals. For instance, a young person from the lower to middle classes who invests in higher education normally does not do so with the goal of developing social capital, even though this integration into the university world carries tremendous potential for developing social capital, since university is one of the main areas for making contacts, especially contacts with more advantaged groups. In this example, even though rational investment in cultural capital is not directly aimed at social capital, another form of apparently natural investment, which involves making opportunity contacts, is all part of making contacts. It should be noted that developing ties, as natural as it may seem, takes skills that involve learning, in particular knowledge about the practices and behaviours of each social group. Thus, the existence of an opportunity structure seems to be an important factor in the development of social capital, along with the necessary social skills.

In terms of policies, this leads to different considerations. Many interventions are less concerned with the durability of links to the labour market than with their creation. If the establishment of a link to the labour market constitutes an opportunity structure, a review of existing program interventions reveals that its inherent potential is reduced through several factors. On the one hand, the experiences are often of limited duration, which reduces the chances of developing real contacts. Next, integration into a parallel labour market that does not always have very close connections to the regular labour market does not represent as effective a bridge to the regular labour market as one would hope.

Another aspect pertains to the dynamics of capital. The significance attached to the development of human capital, which is to say the importance of developing skills that can be directly sold on the labour market, may be too simplistic. The development of social capital, just like labour market integration and job retention, calls for other non-formalized social skills, which are generally overlooked in policy and program interventions even though they are no less important.

Possibly the greatest limitation of current policies, and perhaps also the greatest challenge, is that most program interventions lead to contacts between people living in the same situations of poverty. We saw that the main component of the value of social capital is not the number of links that individuals have but the value of the resources to which they get access through these links. This value is a function of the contacts' social standing. While getting people who are short of resources into networks of similar individuals may help develop their social capital somewhat, it is a good bet that this development will be far from optimal.

This is all the more true if we look at the situation from the perspective of the different means of using social capital in getting jobs and improving career paths, these being labour market contacts, referrals, and the market value of the social capital.[14] The situations in which poor people find themselves will make it more difficult for them to get access to the social ties that could be useful to them for the first two, whereas the third one is generally beyond their reach.[15] Getting people who share a deficit in this type of resource into a network is probably not the most effective strategy.

Finally, it would appear that people do not always use their social capital in the most optimal way. In this regard, social capital is no different from the other types of resources. Some interventions with unemployed people target this dimension, for instance by advising them to use their contacts in finding work. It might be a good idea to develop these interventions further and invest more in them, not to mention make them more systematic.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it is important to start by remembering that the purpose of this paper was to dilute the blend of poverty's complex phenomena down to the only elements that matter in relation to the issue of the links between social capital held by people and situations of poverty. In so doing, several economic, social, and political dimensions were bypassed. Institutional aspects that define the living conditions of people without work (through the transfer of money or goods) and people who are not expected to integrate into the labour market, the rules of the labour market, and work relations are all key determinants in situations of poverty. They were excluded from the discussions because individuals on their own have very little impact on these aspects, regardless of their level of social capital. While this exclusion was necessary for this paper, it is important to remember their significance and the fact that interventions at this level, particularly in terms of the rules that govern work relations, can be far more effective because they act on social groups or communities rather than on isolated individuals. One risk associated with putting the emphasis on the social capital of individuals in the issue of poverty is exactly this individualization of the phenomena of poverty, essentially phenomena that affect social groups.

This having been said, social capital represents an extremely important source for individuals, and its uneven distribution leads to social inequalities and inequities, as with other resources. From this point of view, integrating concerns about social capital into policies aimed at reducing poverty would appear to be essential, as it is in other sectors.

The effectiveness of these policies will depend on their ability to target concrete dynamics in the production of social capital and its use, which will touch upon real and observable relations among social actors. The production of social capital, as with other forms of capital, requires real exchanges between actors, and should not be diluted down to vague adjustments in the perceptions of individuals about these relations.

Interventions aimed at social capital, and hence on relations among individuals, must be done prudently. Any effort to impose practices in this regard would not only be counterproductive, but it could also constitute interference in the lives of individuals and provoke the opposite effect, which is to say trapping them in a particular social category with the associated stigma. Hence, it would be advisable to invest more in the creation of opportunity structures than in the imposition of practices. In closing, and to expand the perspective, we often tend to consider the importance of the school system exclusively from the point of view of the production of cultural capital, and there is good reason to believe that it also plays a key role in the production of social capital, at least as far as the production of skills required for the individual development of social capital.

Notes

1 Since Becker (1964), economists have tended to use the concept of human capital. The advantage of the concept of cultural capital suggested by Bourdieu is that it covers a far broader reality that encompasses the provisions acquired by individuals, which may or may not be "recognized" through established mechanisms. However, there is some confusion as to the difference between cultural capital and human capital, with several authors tending to confuse the two. See Bourdieu (1980b) for a more detailed discussion of the difference between the two concepts.

2 This perspective does not necessarily imply that social capital is not a resource that could be mobilized in some other way in the issue of poverty. For instance, the social capital of different players could be mobilized to demand or bring about institutional changes. The experience of *Collectif pour un Québec sans pauvreté* and Quebec's adoption of *An Act to Combat Poverty and Social Exclusion* are examples of this.

3 In passing, it should be noted that this is a situation in which the exclusion criteria are not easy to pin down. While health criteria may come to mind, it is also important to consider that these can change over time, and that people who were once considered "unfit" for work, because of health or disability issues, may well be considered "fit" today. For instance, different people with hearing or sight disabilities, who were once completely excluded from the labour market, can now, albeit with some difficulty, integrate into the labour market. Thus, it is important to keep in mind that "fit to work" implies a definition that often depends more on society than on the individuals in question.

4 It should be mentioned that all the information on the impact of social capital mentioned in this paper comes from research using a reticulate approach to social capital and its measurement.

5 Naturally, the process may vary when the promotion or transfers between positions is subject to provisions contained in collective bargaining contracts.

6 It should be noted in passing that, to a certain degree, this goes without saying. Networks can only be an effective tool for job seekers, if they are also used by employers, since this process necessarily involves both parties.

7 There are different definitions of strong and weak ties. For example, in his first studies, Granovetter (1973) used four criteria to define them: the duration of the relationship (the length of the relationship and the time spent together), emotional intensity, intimacy, and services exchanged. Degenne and Forsé (1994) added multiplicity to those four criteria (i.e., a tie's having multiple relationships, such as between a friend and a colleague). Lin (1999) differentiated more between "loved ones" (friends and family) and "acquaintances" (colleagues, neighbours, etc.). In so doing he recognized the criteria of intimacy and emotional intensity, while excluding the aspects of duration of relationships. Indeed, the significance of that dimension is difficult to interpret. For example, we usually spend more time with our work colleagues than with friends with whom we are more intimate. If greater significance is attributed to duration, one would tend to consider relations with colleagues as strong ties, and those with friends as weak ties. Inversely, if more importance is placed on intimacy, the opposite conclusion is drawn. Given the difficulty of assessing the significance of duration of relationships, we can use Lin's analysis and consider that the most significant dimension distinguishing strong ties from weak ties is the relation between proximity and intimacy, and so the distinction between strong ties and weak ties is to be understood in that sense in this paper.

8 We can consider, however, that the finding for high-level positions reflects the principle of homophilia. In effect, for these persons, their strong ties already link them to high social status, which is not the case for lower-level workers, for example.

9 This does not mean that such initiatives may not have other positive impacts, such as at the psycho-social level (reducing isolation) or in terms of providing access to resources that reduce the consequences of poverty.

10 It is possible that the least bad way of measuring poverty or wealth would probably be to assess the stock of capital held by individuals by taking into consideration its social, cultural, and financial components.

11 Every province has used different interventions in this regard. The more structured projects along these lines include the Self-Sufficiency Project and the Earnings Supplement Project developed by the Social Research and Demonstration Corporation <www.srdc.org>.

12 One example of such a program is the fund to combat poverty, which was developed in Quebec in the late 1990s.

13 Social Research and Demonstration Corporation. See documents prepared by Johnson (2003) and Greenwood et al., (2003).

14 It should be noted that there may be other modes, but these are the ones that seem to be key for disadvantaged people and are the best documented.

15 There are always exceptions, as for instance in the case of people living in poverty who have invested in this situation to become active (stakeholders, militants, permanent, etc.) in organizations involved in the issue of poverty (helping the poor, human rights activists, etc.).

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Commentary on "Social Capital, Reducing Poverty and Public Policy"

Siobhan Harty, Social Development Canada

The Policy Research Initiative has been at the forefront of research on social capital, especially as a public policy tool. Social Development Canada has been a strong supporter and beneficiary of the PRI's work and welcomes the opportunity to comment on an important study by Maurice Lévesque on a subject that corresponds so centrally to the Department's mandate.

The importance of social networks and trust for supporting and sustaining collective efforts that can result in both human achievement and social progress is by now firmly established. So is the necessity of linking up different forms of capital, especially human and social capital. Lévesque adds to the mix by underscoring the importance of another form of capital – cultural capital – which he defines (after Pierre Bourdieu) as the norms and knowledge that is incorporated in individuals and institutionalized in society. Diplomas and forms of accreditation are two examples of cultural capital: they allow us to assign value to human capital investments, social norms, and expectations which can be used in the labour market. But ultimately, we draw on our social capital to put our cultural capital to use and, by extension, the human capital investment it represents. For Lévesque, these forms of capital are co-generated and public policy needs to recognize this explicitly in the design of program interventions.

It is possible to think of environments in which the components of social capital – trust and social relations – cannot operate. We typically associate such environments with societies under stress. However, within our own "capital rich" society, such environments exist, as evidenced by the many individuals who have few social relations or who don't have social relations founded on trust: the poor, the disadvantaged, the marginalized, and the homeless. A main objective of public policy for these citizens is to equip them with the resources that will move them toward self-sufficiency, most obviously financial resources (e.g., social assistance, social economy activities) and human capital (e.g., active labour market policies, general skills, literacy, and numeracy training). But is this enough? Focusing on job searches and career advancement, Lévesque's argument suggests that it is not: people rely on social capital to get jobs. If this is true, two immediate considerations for policy development present themselves when designing initiatives for those seeking to enter the labour market.

Active networks, not just active policies: Active labour market policies and skills training have been the cornerstone of public policies to help the vulnerable and the unemployed strengthen their attachment to the labour market. However, there is a body of research in economic sociology that argues that both employers and job seekers rely more on active social networks to bring them together: references from network members who are trusted and respected by employers might be of greater importance than the fact that someone participated in a training program. Moreover, it is the "strength of weak ties" that gets people a job – the bridging social capital that crosses social and cultural boundaries.

The right cultural capital: Our society does not value the credentials acquired in training programs as much as it does those acquired from colleges and universities. As a result, governments can unwittingly devalue an individual's cultural capital by having them acquire a qualification through association with other individuals who are stigmatized by their inability to find employment. In other words, a qualification acquired through a job training program is not necessarily the right cultural capital for getting a job even if it seems to be the right human capital investment.

Finding the right pathway out of poverty and social assistance is obviously not straightforward. Maurice Lévesque's study suggests that it is even more complicated than we initially imagined. From a policy and program design perspective, policy makers need to think about how investments in one form of capital might impact on another. Further research is needed to understand the relationships between different forms of capital more clearly. At Social Development Canada, understanding, analyzing and managing such complexities is part of how we do social policy: like Maurice Lévesque, we recognize that good social policy requires it. Social Development Canada congratulates Lévesque on a thoughtful and thought-provoking study, which can inform the Department's ongoing research on poverty.

THE ROLE OF SOCIAL CAPITAL IN AGING WELL

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Social capital, however, is neither a panacea for public health nor a concept that can be easily translated into a recipe for successful aging. In fact, "building" social capital has both positive and negative aspects (Cannuscio et al., 2003: 396).

This is one in a set of papers on "Social Capital in Action: Thematic Policy Studies." The overall project, undertaken by the Policy Research Initiative and federal departmental partners, is designed to explore the role of social capital in specific areas of concern for the federal government. This paper focuses on social capital and aging well and has been written in consultation with departmental partners from Health Canada, Veterans Affairs Canada, and Social Development Canada. The paper includes a review of the literature and analysis of what is already known from research on the linkages between social capital and aging well; how certain policies, programs, or initiatives in this area incorporate elements of social capital and how results from these experiences can provide insights on the extent to which a social capital lens/perspective can affect policy objectives and outcomes; and the potential for further strategic policy research and development.

Social Capital in Context

Papers based on ideas, such as that of social capital, often say as much about the individual writing the paper as about the construct itself. When I[1] was first asked by the PRI to write a paper on social capital and aging well, I had not previously used the term "social capital" in my research, which is focused on older adults, their networks of family members and friends, and the supportiveness of the communities in which they live.

However, for several years I have argued that we cannot understand support or care of older adults without looking at the networks in which they are embedded, the ways in which networks apportion support tasks, and the outcomes for seniors in those networks. More recently, I have begun to look at how communities might work together to be supportive to older adults who live there. I undertook this work with a view to examining the assumption rural seniors are well-supported because rural communities are close-knit and responsive to the needs of residents.

It is perhaps not surprising that researchers at the PRI thought that social capital is an integral part of this research. Having read their discussion paper (PRI, 2003a), it is easy to see the similarities in our views of networks. In this paper, I use as the point of departure the PRI definition of social capital as "the networks of social relations that provide access to needed resources and supports" (PRI, 2003a: 3).

The main focus is on the place of personal social and support networks of older adults in Canada. Most of the research on their networks has been on the direct provision of resources rather than on their ability to link to resources. Especially in cases where networks provide care, intense network connections can be both useful and costly to seniors and their network members. As implied in the quote at the beginning of this paper, social capital is not a guaranteed prerequisite for aging well. Where possible, I point out differences among seniors in the ways in which they benefit from their networks.

In exploring the linkages between networks and aging well, I also endorse the contention that "the potential impact of social capital on various outcomes will vary depending on the ways in which its effects are enhanced or diminished by the wider social, political, economic, and cultural environment" (PRI, 2003b: 3). The argument that one cannot understand networks without placing them in context is consistent with my approach to understanding issues in aging. I come from a background in human ecology where the basic assumption is that context is important in understanding the experiences of individuals. In particular, I have a long-standing interest in how personal networks and communities are supportive to older adults and in how the broad policy context influences those relationships.

Appendix A illustrates the contexts relevant to understanding social capital and aging well. Older adults are placed at the centre within key contexts of their social, support, and care networks, their communities, and the broader policy settings that operate at federal, provincial/territorial, regional, and local levels. This contextual lens is notable in that seniors are assumed to be influenced by these contexts, but also to be able to influence them. This assumption runs contrary to much of our research and practice in aging in which individuals with declining abilities are seen as passive respondents to their environments (Ranzijn, 2002).

The personal context is the social, support, and care networks of the older adults. Networks are immediate, often proximal, and represent linkages to older adults (Bronfenbrenner, 1994). In turn, communities influence network proximity and composition. The economic vitality of communities may enhance the likelihood that proximate networks will include younger adults, have climates or other amenities that may influence migration of older adults at retirement, and provide service environments that enhance or deplete network resources (Keating et al., 2001). Policies are the more macro values and programs that influence the ways in which communities and networks relate to older adults. By virtue of these influences, the state has a central role in the construction of aging through the allocation of scarce resources and the transmission of beliefs concerning family care and support (Phillipson, in press). The policy environment itself is complex with public programs existing across levels of government and sectoral domains.

This paper discusses the role of social capital as a resource in the process of aging well. In it, we examine what is known about the relationships between social capital and aging well, taking into account seniors' personal, community, and policy contexts. A social capital lens will be used to review selected federal public programs. Suggestions are made for a policy research agenda toward development of evidence to inform public policy related to social capital for seniors. Throughout the document, we provide a critique of social capital as a useful public policy lens.

Social Capital and the Networks of Older Adults

The sources of social capital lie in the structure of social relations developed over time (PRI, 2003b: 16).

The social capital perspective of networks as providing access to resources is evident in the following: "As researchers adopt a network approach, they model support as a complex flow of resources among a wide range of actors, rather than as just a transaction between two individuals. ... [Taking this approach] it becomes apparent that the actors' power, influence, and access to resources affect their supportiveness in networks" (Walker et al., 1993: 72). Networks are not all alike, but differ considerably in composition and resources that they might provide to older adults. Three types of networks are relevant to this discussion: social, support, and care networks.

Social networks are groups of people known to older adults and with whom they have close links. They tell us the number of people in the network and how they are related to a target individual and provide the potential for support to be delivered (Langford et al., 1997). This support potential of social networks has been described as network social capital – the number of members willing to provide support, and the resources they are able to mobilize when providing support (Tijhuis et al., 1998). Cashing in social capital comes from actualizing the support potential of the social network (Jennings, 1999).

One truism of network analysis is that "mere presence of a tie between two people does not equate with the provision of support" (Walker et al., 1993: 72). Thus, support networks are the subset of social network members who provide everyday tasks and services to older adults (Fast et al., 2004). Support activities include day-to-day social interaction, monitoring and providing advice, and/or instrumental activities, such as home maintenance, meal preparation, and providing transportation (Fernández-Ballesteros, 2002; Keating et al., 2003; Wenger, 1997a). Support networks are perceived to contain strong, close, and stable social ties including long-standing kin and friend relationships (Peek and Lin, 1999; van Tilburg, 1998).

In the face of long-term health problems or impaired functional status of the senior, support network members may be called upon to increase the range or amount of instrumental and emotional support (van Groenou and van Tilburg, 1997). When support is provided, because of seniors' long-term health problems or functional limitations (Barrett and Lynch, 1999; Keating et al., 1999), support is designated as care. Care differs in type and intensity from what is required in everyday life (Hanson et al., 1997; Walker et al., 1995) and care networks reflect this difference. They are less diversified and more fragile with higher proportions of close kin than those without chronic health problems (Wenger, 1997b).

In what ways might these networks of seniors be the source of social capital? Two types of social capital seem most descriptive of the potential inherent in these networks. Bonding social capital is typified by relations within homogenous groups, and is "best suited for providing the social and psychological supports its members need for "getting by" in their day-to-day activities" (PRI, 2003b: 23). Typified by strong ties to others who share similar backgrounds, bonding social capital confirms one's sense of self (Taylor, 2004).

Bridging social capital is more heterogeneous and is useful in connecting people to "external assets" (PRI, 2003b: 23) that help them "get ahead" (Putnam cited in Smith et al., 2002: 6). They tend to be based on weak ties to those who are dissimilar to oneself. These ties "can span holes in the social structure" by offering access to other networks (Perri 6, 1997: 13). Bridging social capital often has been associated with assisting people with access to the labour force. There has been little discussion of older adults and how bridging social capital might be useful to them.

What do we know about the nature of social capital inherent in support and care networks? Seniors' networks become more intense and homogeneous in the process of evolution from support to care. Clearly, in social capital language, care networks are bonding networks. The strong links of care networks may be useful in "getting by" in terms of providing tasks that help maintain an older adult in the community or in a long-term care setting. The question is whether they militate against connecting to external resources that might be useful to the older adult. Small, intense care networks may be well suited to provide tasks that are necessary to stave off nursing home placement, but may lack the resources to provide the linkages that might enhance quality of life of care recipients, as well as address the competing demands faced by network members.

The nature of the social capital inherent in support networks is not as clear. These networks are larger and more likely to include weaker ties that are heterogeneous in terms of age, marital status, and education (Adams and Blieszner, 1995). It may be that support networks are in a better position to assist with connecting to other resources than are the more intense care networks. These questions have implications for how public policy is targeted toward the maintenance or enhancement of seniors' networks. Enhancing care networks, which has been the focus of recent public policy, may lead to both positive and negative outcomes for seniors. Enhancing support networks may be done through other programmatic directions that have yet to be explored.

An extensive review of existing research on the characteristics and activities of social, support, and care networks together with recent findings on community level support is presented in Appendix B. These findings show important network differences. For example, age matters. Older senior have smaller and more kin-focused social networks, though older women have larger social networks than do older men. Higher education is associated with a greater number of ties to younger friends and neighbours, while lower education is associated with support from family. Those with greater income and better health have more ties to the wider community. Characteristics that consistently make a difference in the likelihood that seniors will receive care tasks are having higher proportions of women in their networks, higher proportions of kin, and larger network size. These are particularly important for whether seniors receive personal care. Findings on available community support demonstrate a wide variation across the country. Community characteristics that frame the potential for support include population size, distance of the community from a service centre, and demographic mix. Highly supportive communities are relatively small in size, have higher proportions of older adults and of long-term residents, and are typified by relatively higher hours of unpaid word done by residents. Most notably, residing in a cohesive community may provide individuals with access to social resources, even when personal networks are lacking.

Overall, do networks enhance the lives of older adults? The findings presented in Appendix B clearly demonstrate that networks differ considerably in social capital. They differ as well in their ability to enhance aging well. In the next section of the paper, relationships between networks and aging well are reviewed from the point of view of what types of social capital might lead to aging well.

Network Outcomes and Aging Well

Aging well is most likely to occur when people can take advantage of all the possibilities available to them (Adams and Blieszner, 1995: 213).

Understanding Aging Well

A main reason to consider social capital in light of networks of older adults is that networks might enhance positive outcomes for them. The research, practice, and policy literature reflect strong themes about the importance of family members and friends in the lives of older adults. Social ties have been linked to beneficial health and social outcomes (Martire et al., 1999), to the maintenance of independence in later life (Bowling et al., 1991) and to responsive care to seniors with chronic long-term health problems (Havens et al., 2001). Networks may be a resource for aging well. Yet, there is evidence that networks do not always benefit seniors. Networks may be too fragile to meet their needs in the face of increasing expectations that they will be the main source of support to older adults (Keating et al., 2003). Strong ties inherent in close family and friend networks may mean that expectations for high levels of support may strain relationships and reduce potential for the bonding social capital that otherwise is a strength of close relationships.

There is no consensus on what constitutes aging well, making it difficult to evaluate whether social capital might lead to aging well. In fact, there is a vigorous debate about whether the term should be part of our lexicon. Chapman (in press: 4) summarizes the controversy. "Some would argue that aging well is an offensive concept because it suggests that some individuals age poorly, as though aging could be a personal failure.... However, it also has been argued that the concept is useful because it moves gerontology away from a focus on dependency, frailty, and general misery and suggests positive, resourceful images of later life with an emphasis on older adults' assets and abilities."

Despite this caveat, there is merit in using the term aging well as a proxy for positive outcomes for older adults, especially within the mandate of this report. Networks may result in either positive or negative outcomes for older adults. Before considering the circumstances under which social capital might lead to better outcomes, it is important to understand some of the main definitions of aging well. These fall into three main categories. Whether social capital enhances or detracts from aging well depends on which of these is the focus. If aging well means having optimal health and functional status, then the question is whether networks provide the needed resources and access to services necessary to enhance physical and cognitive status. If aging well is having optimal control over one's engagement in society, one might look to whether networks constrain or enhance these opportunities. Finally, if aging well is having the best fit between the seniors' personal resources and their personal and community contexts, then how do networks assist them in negotiating these relationships as their resources change in later life?

A common view of aging well is that it means having a set of health and functional status resources. Resources of the individual often are seen as the key to aging well. Physical and cognitive resources are important, because they provide the opportunity for engagement (Rowe and Kahn, 1997). Commenting on this perspective, Chapman (in press: 14) noted: "To age well, individuals were to lead lives that avoided disability and disease, and thereby maintained mental and physical capacities that facilitated productive and social engagement in society." Ranzijn (2002: 39) was critical of the notion that maintenance of physical health might be an indication of aging well, noting that even much of the research into aging well "has been concerned with maintenance of residual function rather than identifying and enabling continued growth."

A second approach is that to age well is to be engaged in work and community activities. There have been different perspectives on the importance of active engagement. Disengagement theory was an early approach to aging well in which the basic premise was that the individual and society were best served by the individual's withdrawal from engagement in productive activities such as labour force participation (Cumming and Henry, 1961). More contemporary theorists argue that those who age well are actively involved in work and leisure activities (Kendig, 2004). This view of aging well is heavily subscribed to in contemporary research and policy. For example, in its declaration of a research agenda on aging for the 21st century, the United Nations Programme on Ageing and the International Association of Gerontology declared social participation and integration as the first research priority (UN Division for Social Policy and Development, 2002).

The third main view is that aging well has to do with the person-environment fit. Contentment results when there is a good fit between the values and preferences that are important to seniors, and their experiences within those domains (Eales et al., 2001: 292). Ranzijn (2002) argued that the fit "can be improved by either enhancing personal attributes, altering the environment to suit the attributes of the person, or both" and notes that "an older person is not an island but a social being living in dynamic interactions with the social environment, and quality of life for individual persons is inextricably linked to the quality of life of their social network."

Social Capital Outcomes and Aging Well

More social capital will not necessarily always lead to better outcomes (PRI, 2003b: 5).

Given the different understandings of aging well, perhaps a better question is not whether more social capital leads to better outcomes, but whether those who subscribe to the differing views of aging well – as maintenance of physical and cognitive resources, as engagement, or as person-environment fit – would look to different sorts of network resources.

Do networks help older adults maintain physical and cognitive resources toward aging well? The evidence on this question is mixed. Social and support networks have been associated with positive health outcomes, especially when there is high contact with friends (Smith et al., 2002). Early research showed that "the mortality risk for people without social support was two to three times higher than for people who had better social networks" (van Kemenade et al., 2003: 32), though some recent studies have not found a link between social capital and health (Veenstra cited in Smith et al., 2002). Yet findings that social network size shrinks with age suggest that those who are very old may lack the network resources to enhance physical aspects of aging well.

Care networks focus on maintaining physical and cognitive resources of older adults. It may be that while care networks have a high level of social capital, they are not able to enhance aging well. In sharp contrast to the positive links between social and support networks and maintenance of physical health, care networks are associated with poor health outcomes. This is not to say that care provided by family members and friends causes a reduction in health. Rather, by the time chronic care to a frail older adult is required, networks may not be in a good position to enhance health. As noted earlier, members of support networks may not make the transition into more intense caregiving, resulting in care networks with reduced capacity. Care may be critically important to older adults, and family and friend networks are heavily involved in providing care to those with chronic health problems. However, care networks are small and kin focused and may be eroded as a result of the poor health of the senior (Phillipson, 2004) referred to this reduced capacity of networks with strong ties as network overload.

A second approach is that aging well is about engagement. "For a growing number of seniors, becoming older is no longer a time of rest and looking backward but a productive period when new careers, interests, and activities are pursued with vitality" (Perry, 1995: 152). In fact, analyses of recent studies of time use of older Canadians have shown that the vast majority of older adults participate in at least one active leisure pursuit per day. Retirees are more likely to participate in cognitively, physically, and socially active leisure than those who are still employed (Fast et al., in press). The implication is that such engagement leads to positive outcomes. From this perspective, the question is how networks provide access to involvement with family and friends or to the broader community.

The long history of research on connections to family and friends, and findings on support and care networks presented earlier in this paper, point to the importance of networks in helping seniors remain engaged with those who know them best. Findings on support and care networks presented above attest to the multi-faceted nature of these links. They can have positive outcomes in enhancing self-esteem through shared tasks and experiences or in providing opportunities for reciprocity within these closely knit groups. For example, older adults are often involved in providing support to grandchildren or to same-generation family members and friends with chronic health problems. And children and grandchildren may be engaged with them in finding information on the Internet.

In contrast, a common theme in the theoretical literature is that this bonding social capital characterized by a close-knit, homogeneous group of family and friends may militate against community linkages. This may be significant because, as Wenger (1996: 65) has observed, "dense networks provide better access to emotional resources but loose knit networks provide better access to tangible resources and weak ties are particularly important for information seeking." The emotional resources provided by dense, bonded social networks are important in making seniors feel valued by family and friends. Less is known about how looser bridging networks might foster engagement, because we have not explored the place of weaker ties in the lives of older adults.

A third main approach is that those who are aging well have the best fit between their personal resources and their environments. Adams and Blieszner (1995: 217) summarized this approach. "To age well, older adults need to develop relationships with people who help them in ways they need and want to be helped. Sometimes feeling dependent is worse for older adults' subjective reaction to aging than receiving no help. The notion of aging well implies that older adults must actively shape their relationships with relatives and friends rather than passively hope that their needs to help and be helped will be met."

The idea of choice is central to this notion of aging well. Yet much of the activity of care networks is done under duress, sometimes in the face of opposition by cared for persons who mourn the loss of independence that comes from accepting help. Under some circumstances, networks might help enhance choice. For example, care networks might provide assistance in helping older adults make the transition from driving themselves to travelling with neighbours so community links such as church attendance and bridge club are maintained. The key lies not in how services are provided to seniors but in how they can be assisted in acquiring effective strategies to deal with changes in their abilities to meet their goals (Baltes and Baltes, 1990), in the network resources available to them, and in the amenities and opportunities in their communities. As discussed earlier, the bridging functions that are important to connect seniors to resources may not be part of these close-knit networks. Yet such linkages might enhance a sense of control over decisions that affect the independence of older adults. One of the thorniest problems in developing sound public policy is that of finding the balance between asking networks to do too much and thus reducing their ability to help seniors age well, and public costs.

Programs and Initiatives, the Social Capital Lens, and Aging Well

We need to know what there is about programs to build social capital that work...and toward what end (C. Rocan, personal communication, July 2004).

The final section of the report is devoted to a discussion of the place of social capital in directing program and policy initiatives in the area of aging well. Some current programs are reviewed using a social capital lens to consider their possible impact on aging well; questions are posed about whether government should intervene in the development of social capital; and suggestions are made for a strategic policy research agenda.

The social capital lens has proven to be a useful tool in reviewing what we know about networks and aging well. When viewed from a social capital perspective, the review of networks of older adults shows that most of our understanding is of the bonding social capital inherent in support and care networks, with only limited knowledge of the bridging social capital in support networks and linking social capital inherent in community networks.

Current federal programs were not developed with a social capital lens. However, a number of programs appear to have the potential to build social capital for seniors in ways that will enhance aging well.

Programs that Enhance Bonding Social Capital

Care networks are an example of bonding social capital where more social capital may not lead to aging well. We know that family/friend networks provide a great deal of care and that care can be critically important in maintaining the functional status of frail older adults. However, care may be costly to recipients, because it can strain relationships with family/friend carers and to care networks that incur employment, out-of-pocket, social, and health costs. Most care networks are small and may not have sufficient resources to manage the high demands associated with care. The increasing expectations placed on caregivers to frail seniors seem the antithesis of building or maintaining the kind of bonding social capital that might lead to positive outcomes of aging well.

Two types of interventions might enhance social capital in the networks of frail seniors requiring care. The first is to provide direct support to frail older adults, thus alleviating pressure on networks and on relationships between older adults and their care network members. A program that should be the pillar of this support is home care. Social and health services provided to frail seniors at home can help them stay in their own homes and stay connected to their networks in ways that allow for positive interactions with them. Yet home care for those with chronic health problems was missing from the Romanow Report and has lower priority than sub-acute care in provincial programs. A recently announced federal-provincial agreement on acute home care could serve as a template for chronic care. Assured access to a set of chronic home care services across the country could go a long way toward alleviating the enforced intimacy experienced by members of close networks and seniors.

The second approach to building social capital in care networks lies in supporting the networks themselves. Networks that can operate without high social and economic costs are more likely to be able to provide the positive links with the older adult that can confirm identity and augment resources to help provide the best person-environment fit. Two types of programs that have the potential to provide this type of support are those that give network members a break from caregiving and those that reduce competing demands of employment and caring.

Respite programs for caregivers could be a key component of support to care networks. The purpose of respite is to give caregivers a break. Services most often include day programs, facility-based respite where the older adult can be placed for a short period of time, and in-home services. All provinces have some form of respite services, though in a recent environmental scan of publicly funded respite programs in Canada, Dunbrack (2003: 1) noted that funding is inadequate and services are not meeting the demand, especially for in-home respite. "A high proportion of those requiring respite are the elderly spouses of elderly patients, many of whom are living on low incomes. The middle-aged children of the elderly constitute another sizeable group of family caregivers. Their challenges involve managing caregiving while fulfilling responsibilities to younger family members and to a job. Family caregivers of young children face many challenges; most public programs provide supplementary funding to help offset their costs." There is no parallel supplementary funding for carers to older adults. To enhance social capital in care networks, respite programs need to be more available, of a type that caregivers want, and be available to networks rather than individuals. The concept of primary caregiver enshrined in much public policy is not compatible with the social capital lexicon.

The Compassionate Care Leave program also has the potential to enhance network resources. It provides financial support through the Employment Insurance program to employees who take time off work to care for relatives who are terminally ill (SDC, 2004b). The program allows for a maximum of eight weeks of paid leave – a small portion of the average two plus years of care to a frail senior. Nonetheless, the program has the great advantage of being structured so it can be shared among caregivers, making it an ideal type of program to support networks. And given its similarity to parental leave programs, there should be potential for expansion to allow for sufficient time to manage care without detrimental effects on care networks. Along with a comprehensive Canada Pension Plan drop-out provision for caregivers, employment related policies could help strengthen networks of carers.

Programs that Foster Bridging Social Capital

Support networks and other more loosely knit networks can provide access to others who can assist older adults with maintaining or initiating engagement or providing access to resources. One theme in the social capital literature is that social capital is created through civic participation. Thus, from a social capital perspective, programs that foster productive or social engagement should help older adults maintain social networks and enhance aging well.

A goal of Social Development Canada is the inclusion of seniors and helping them remain active through supporting community-based programs that encourage inclusion. There is great potential here for the Department to use a social capital lens to foster the building of social networks that would link seniors to their communities. The new version of the New Horizons for Seniors Program, announced in the 2004 Budget, aims to "reduce loneliness and isolation amongst the senior population and to ensure their continued social involvement by supporting and funding a wide range of community-based projects. More specifically, it will enable seniors to participate in social activities; pursue an active life; and contribute to their communities" (SDC, 2004a). A social capital lens is evident in the language in which the program is described as aiming to "strengthen networks and associations between community members, community organizations, and governments." This lens could provide the framework for SDC to evaluate how well the program fosters engagement, the strengthening of networks, and aging well.

Another approach to inclusion is for government to be directly involved in providing seniors with the vehicles for gaining access to key social, health, and financial resources. The Canadian Seniors Partnership, co-chaired by the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Ontario Seniors' Secretariat, is a promising initiative in the area of providing bridging social capital for older adults. Its goal is to help governments and non-governmental organizations better integrate their programs and services to improve access to services for older Canadians (Ferguson, 2004).

Members of the Canadian Seniors Partnership have sponsored initiatives, such as the Seniors Canada On-Line (SCOL) web site that was launched in January 2001. It has links to federal, provincial, and territorial government information geared to older Canadians, their families, caregivers, and those organizations that provide support. More recently, the Collaborative Seniors' Portal was launched in Brockville, Ontario. This initiative enables local residents to access information from all three levels of government in one web site <seniorsinfo.ca>. The goal is to add more communities in Ontario and to expand the Portal into a national network of web sites for seniors that will enable integrated service delivery (Ferguson, 2004). The ability of government to expand and maintain this network will be key to its success. Support and care networks of older adults lacking in skills to assist in connecting seniors to services as well as rural networks might benefit from this initiative.

Programs that Foster Linking Social Capital

Programs that might foster and help connections among networks do not directly enhance seniors' personal networks. Rather, they foster linkages among voluntary sector organizations and various levels of governmental programs. In social capital language, these linked programs build connections among networks thus providing better access to resources by seniors and their families.

The Canadian Caregiver Coalition (CCC) is a bilingual, national organization representing and promoting the voice, needs, and interests of family/friend caregivers. The CCC plays a key role in linking caregiver groups across the country that are poorly resourced and otherwise isolated and yet are an important support to local caregivers. The networking extends further to include researchers and policy people – a collective that has produced a number of excellent briefs on strategies to support caregivers. In the short time it has been in existence, the CCC has brought this collective voice to discussions of key caregiver issues: payment for care, men in caregiving, skill development for family caregivers, end of life care, mental health issues, and home care.

This organization is an excellent example of how to develop social capital. It supports networks of carers; it links caregiver organizations; it brings in researchers working on caregiving; it works with government on issues of public policy to support caregivers. It has been supported by foundations, the private sector, and government though its fiscal future is tenuous at best. One of the best investments in building social capital toward aging well would be for government to provide ongoing resources for CCC to continue its work.

A second example is a networked organization that began locally, but has built provincial and national linkages. Operation Friendship in Edmonton provides services to marginalized, inner-city seniors including a drop-in centre, an outreach program, recreational programming, a helping hands program, a housing registry, and a number of housing facilities. Program objectives are consistent with helping seniors age well by finding the best fit between their situation and resources available to them. Their services are delivered on the basis that the clients have the right to choose their own lifestyles, and the program is not meant to rehabilitate, but to provide alternatives which could allow them to improve their quality of life (Operation Friendship, nd).

Networking is a large part of the work of Operation Friendship. This agency has linkages locally (with municipal government, other inner-city organizations, churches, regional health authority, other not-for-profit and private sector organizations, and Aboriginal elders), provincially (with government departments), agencies in other cities with similar mandates, and nationally to similar organizations across the country through an umbrella organization called Urban Core Support Network (UCSN). Operation Friendship's major funders are Family and Community Support Services, Alberta Seniors, United Way, and the Greater Edmonton Foundation.

Strategic Policy Research and Program Development

The Policy Research Initiative overview paper on social capital (2003b) presents three possible approaches for integrating social capital ideas into policy. These are to view social capital formation as the primary policy objective, as a tool, among others, for achieving broader policy objectives to use a social capital lens for better understanding the various localities, situations, and communities where action is taking place and where policy efforts are (or should be) concentrated.

In our view, the third is the most promising approach in understanding how networks might lead to aging well. In this paper we have attempted to illustrate how some localities, situations, and communities of older adults can influence the kind of networks they have and the nature of support they receive. The network lens used in this paper has highlighted some of the potential challenges in developing public policy that would enhance networks of older adults in ways that would lead to aging well. These challenges include better understanding the weak ties of older adults, and the purposes they serve, how community linkages can be useful to older adults, the place of care networks in aging well, the place of families in aging well, and the importance of program evaluation.

1. Better understand the weak ties of older adults, and the purposes they serve.

Relatively little is known about how older adults use or maintain network ties that might bridge them to resources, or what are the resources they seek. There are promising developments in linkages to formal resources through the Internet such as the Seniors Portal. And programs such as New Horizons might be used to explore the development of informal linkages through community involvement. Regardless, we need to develop new approaches to determining the nature of social ties and support networks since current approaches to mapping networks of older adults focus on strong ties, mostly to close friends and relatives.

Further, we need to know what motivates the development of linkages, how people use them, and toward what end. This knowledge could inform policy by helping us understand how to articulate desired outcomes of aging well in these programs.

2. *Examine how linkages in physical and virtual communities can be useful to older adults.*

Physical communities differ greatly in their social capital potential. Urban research has shown that some groups of seniors may experience social exclusion, because of incompatibility between their experiences and beliefs and those of the community around them. Rural seniors differ greatly in whether they are embedded in supportive networks. We need to understand the important themes in the senior-community interface to best target programs to enhance linkages. As well, the new commitment to virtual communities, such as exemplified by the Canadian Caregiver Coalition should be monitored carefully to determine how seniors, their families, and the voluntary and formal service sectors might benefit from such connections. Such programs have the potential to forge linkages among networks at many levels.

3. *Determine the place of care networks in aging well.*

This is one of the most difficult policy research questions when it comes to networks and aging well. We have lots of evidence to show that family/friend care networks are critically important in helping support frail older adults. And we know that care networks include people closest to the frail senior and thus have great potential for bonding social capital. Yet evidence of costs to those networks and strained relationships suggest they do not lead to aging well – at least not from the point of view of the main definitions of aging well. We already know that programs that help them remain at home are highly valued by frail seniors. We need to better understand how programs that support members of care networks might enhance aging well.

4. *Determine the place of families in aging well.*

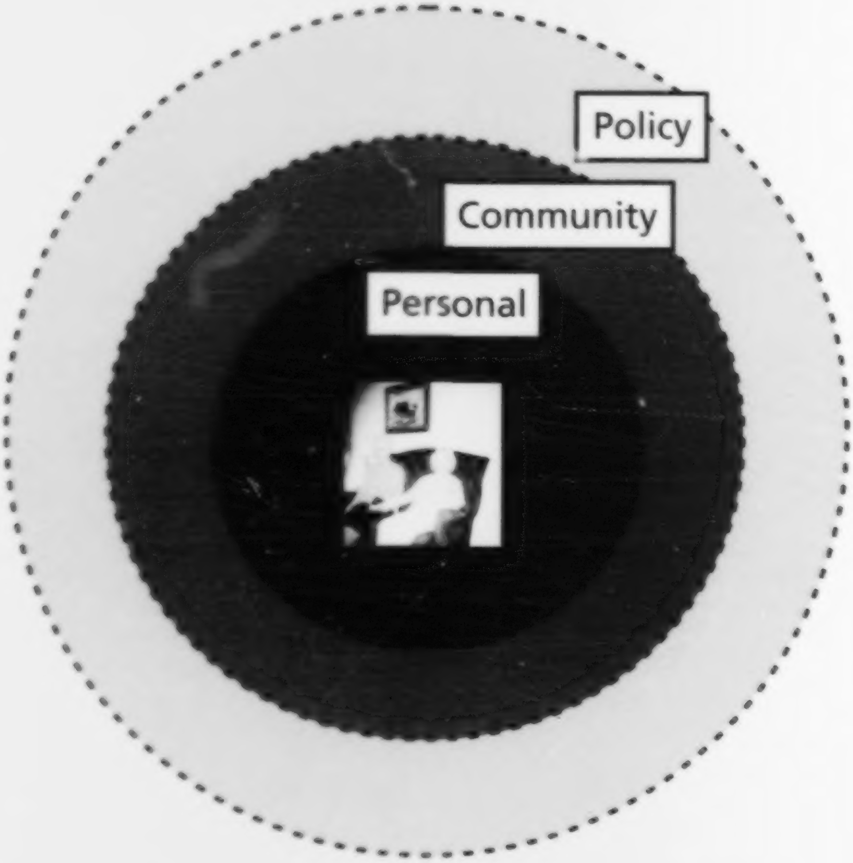
The Australian government created the Department of Family and Community Services to emphasize the role of families as the cornerstone of a well functioning and socially cohesive civil society (Jackson, 1998). They argue that the value of families in building social capital or social cohesion should not be underestimated. Most of our knowledge of families of older adults is about caregiving. If we wish to create public policy to support social capital and aging well, we need to know more about how families operate to provide social capital to older adults not in need of care. A great deal of public policy has a direct or indirect impact on families. Targeted family research along with an impact analysis of relevant current health and social programs policy would go a long way to understanding how families build social capital and for whom.

5. *Evaluate, evaluate, evaluate.*

We cannot know whether programs are enhancing social capital or fostering aging well unless there are clear evaluation strategies in place that apply a social capital lens in the framework. Evaluation strategies may fall into two distinct categories. One set of evaluation strategies should be targeted toward programs that are developed with a social capital lens toward enhancing bonding or bridging social capital. Each will require specific evaluation criteria. Programs meant to develop bonding social capital should include operational measures of increased bonding, as well as measures of the impact of this increased bonding on network members, especially older adults. In contrast, evaluations of programs meant to enhance bridging social capital should focus on the nature of the bridging, whether the bridging has enhanced resources of the older adults in these networks and how this bridging might have enhanced aging well. In both cases, evaluation plans should make explicit the view of aging well that forms the basis of determining success of the program.

A second category of evaluation may be appropriate when there is an interest in evaluating existing programs or areas in which no public programs exist. Better awareness and understanding of the role and limitations of certain types of networks of older Canadians is important for ensuring that new program design and implementation or policy directions do not disrupt or weaken existing networks. For example, care networks in which all members are in the labour force provide less care than networks with a mix of employed and not-employed carers, and networks of employed carers have higher stress levels and employment consequences than others. Yet there are few public programs that assist employed caregivers to frail seniors in balancing their work and family roles. Such threats to the bonding social capital of care networks might be reduced by expansion of programs to reduce such employment-caregiving conflicts reducing tensions that might weaken networks that already played an important role.

APPENDIX A: CONTEXTS OF SOCIAL CAPITAL FOR OLDER ADULTS


Policy
Community
Personal

APPENDIX B: RECENT FINDINGS ON SOCIAL, SUPPORT AND CARE NETWORKS AND COMMUNITY-LEVEL SUPPORT

Characteristics of Social, Support, and Care Networks

A main challenge in addressing the question of how networks are a source of social capital to older adults is that there has been relatively little crossover in our understanding of social and support networks of older adults, and of care provided by network members. A rich body of literature exists on how social ties provide the resources for ongoing support. However, most of the research literature on family/friend care is based on seniors and an individual care provider (Boaz and Hu, 1997). Thus, there has been little systematic comparison of the relationships among social, support, and care networks. In the context of attempting to better understand social capital and aging well, this exploration is important. Support networks and care networks differ in their size, membership (mix of women and men, people of different ages, kin, neighbours, and friends, and proximity to the senior), and impact on older adults.

In terms of gender mix, men are underrepresented in support networks compared to broader social networks (Fernández-Ballestros, 2002; Wenger, 1997a). Much of the research on care suggests it may be even more female-dominated, though recent findings from a national survey of caregiving suggest that proportions of women and men who provide care are similar (Cranswick, 2003; Stobert and Cranswick, 2004). Similarly, social networks likely have a mix of ages (Uhlenberg and DeJong, 2004), while support networks may be more homogeneous in tasks like emotional and social support since age peers have shared history and experience. Care networks most likely comprise people who are middle-aged (a generation younger than the cared for person) or elderly (Fast et al., 2004).

Research on the social networks of older adults suggests that kin may predominate as same generation friends are lost to illness and death (Klein Ikkink and van Tilburg, 1998). Less is known about the relationship composition of support networks since research on kin as supporters has been conducted separately from research on friends and neighbours. Friends and neighbours may provide different amounts and types of support than family members (Nocon and Pearson, 2000), perhaps providing access to other resources typical of bridging social capital. Care networks are predominantly close kin and long-standing friends since neighbours and other non-kin are less likely to move to providing more intense levels of tasks in the face of declining health of the older adult. Proximity also differentiates support from care networks. Modern communication technology may allow some types of social and emotional support to be provided at a distance (Fast et al., 2004), though others, such as transportation and providing personal care and meal preparation for a frail senior, clearly require that members be nearby (Keating et al., 2003).

Finally, network size may be a main determinant of social capital inherent in support and care networks. Social networks of older adults have an average of 12 to 13 people (van Tilburg, 1998; Wenger, 1997a); support networks from 5 to 10 people; and care networks from three to five people (Tennstedt et al., 1989). Stone and Rosenthal (1996) argued that older adults with small support networks are at risk of having poor care resources, because their care networks will be even smaller. Small, intense care networks may be well suited to provide tasks that are necessary to stave off nursing home placement, but lack the resources to provide the linkages that might enhance quality of life of care recipients.

Overall, the smaller, more kin-focused, proximate care networks seem most likely to be sources of bonding social capital while the more diverse, less dense support networks have more potential to link seniors with other resources.

Recent Findings: Characteristics of Social, Support, and Care Networks

No Canadian data allow for direct comparisons among these three types of networks. This section presents findings from two separate surveys of Canadian seniors. Together they provide an overview of the similarities and differences among these networks. Information on social and support networks is from a 2004 national telephone survey of rural seniors in Canada (Dobbs et al., 2004). Information on care networks is from a sub-sample of older adults in Canada with chronic health problems who were part of a national Statistics Canada survey on aging and social support (Statistics Canada, 2002). Information on care networks is based on those who reported having received care from family members or friends in the previous year.[2]

As shown in Table 1, the vast majority of seniors in rural Canada (91.8 percent) have social networks ranging in size from five to thirteen. In contrast, size of support networks is distributed more evenly, with one third having one or two people, one third having three or four people, and one-third having between five and thirteen people. The median size of rural seniors' social networks is ten, whereas their support network is much smaller with a median of three members. Clearly, the number of individuals who provide rural seniors with support is much smaller than the number of family members and close friends with whom they have social relationships, evidence that one cannot equate social and support networks.

As with size, there are differences between rural seniors' social and support networks in gender composition. The overwhelming majority of respondents' social networks comprise both men and women. In comparison, while two thirds of respondents' support networks are mixed, nearly 20 percent are entirely women and 13 percent entirely men. Relationship composition differs as well. Almost all (96.8 percent) social networks have a mix of close kin (spouses and children), distant kin (nieces, nephews, grandchildren), and non-kin (close friends and neighbours). Fewer (61 percent) had mixed support networks; over 15 percent had support networks that were entirely of close kin, and nearly 9 percent had entirely friends and neighbours.

Support networks are more age homogeneous than social networks. Almost all (94.6 percent) rural seniors have mixed ages in their social networks. However, a smaller proportion (65.2 percent) has mixed aged support networks. The rest have networks that are entirely one age group, notably 14 percent of support networks entirely of individuals

Table 1: Characteristics of Social and Support Networks of Rural Seniors in Canada

Network Characteristic	Percent of Respondents	
	Social Network	Support Network
Network size		
1-2 people	2.2	33.5
3-4 people	6.0	34.4
5-13 people	91.8	32.1
Gender composition		
Female only network	2.4	19.7
Male only network	1.2	13.1
Mixed male and female network	96.1	66.2
Relationship composition		
Close kin only network	1.9	15.4
Distant kin only network	0.2	2.1
Non kin only network	0.8	8.8
Mixed relationship network	96.8	61.0
Age composition		
Entire network <44 years old	0.7	5.7
Entire network 45-64 years old	0.9	14.5
Entire network 65+ years old	3.0	11.1
Mixed ages	94.6	65.2
Proximity composition		
Entire network same household/building	8.6	39.1
Entire network outside community	0.9	6.9
Mixed proximity	90.2	54.0

Table 2: Characteristics of Care Networks of Seniors in Canada

Network Characteristics	Percent of Respondents	
	Emotional and Instrumental Tasks	Instrumental Tasks Only
Network size		
1-2 people	42.3	80.5
3-4 people	30.3	17.3
5-13 people	17.5	6.5
Gender composition		
Female only network		33.4
Male only network		33.4
Mixed male and female network		33.2
Relationship composition		
Close kin only network		62.8
Distant kin only network		8.2
Non kin only network		13.4
Mixed relationship network		15.7
Age composition		
Entire network <44 years old		15.9
Entire network 45-64 years old		30.7
Entire network 65+ years old		21.9
Mixed ages		31.6
Proximity composition		
Entire network same household/building		31.5
Entire network in community/surrounding area		45.4
Entire network <half day away		1.12
Entire network >half day away		0.4
Mixed proximity		21.63
Employment composition		
All network members employed		33.3
No network members employed		39.3
Mixed employment status		27.4
Duration of caregiving		
All network members caring for <1 year		6.7
All network members caring for 1-2 years		6.4
All network members caring for 2+ years		63.8
Mixed duration		23.0

Note: All characteristics other than network size are based on network members who provided instrumental care tasks only.

aged 45 to 64 years, and an additional 11 percent entirely of other seniors. Proximity plays a greater role in the composition of support than social networks. The social networks of most respondents have a mix of members who live in the same community or at a distance from the rural senior. In contrast, almost 40 percent of respondents have their entire support network living with them.

Overall, rural seniors are embedded in diverse social networks with women and men of all ages and relationships who live in the same community as, or at a distance from, them. Their support networks are much smaller, and have less diversity in gender, age, relationship, and proximity composition. Lack of diversity in networks fits the belief that rural communities are close knit and homogeneous with a high degree of coherence between personal and community contexts in which these seniors live their lives.

Table 2 shows characteristics of care networks of Canadian seniors. Data cannot be directly compared to those from social and support networks since care networks are of all Canadian seniors with long-term health problems who reported receiving help because of that chronic health problem. Nonetheless, overall size and other characteristics may be illustrative of potential differences in social capital in these networks.

When both emotional and instrumental care tasks are included, networks range in size from 1 to 10 with an average of just under three members. Seventy percent of care recipients have more than one person caring for them. Networks providing only instrumental tasks are smaller, with a mean size of just under two members. These differences suggest that when it comes to hands-on tasks most carers have a limited number of people with whom to share the care. An important caveat is that these numbers may be somewhat low since network membership is determined from the perspective of the older adult who receives care. Some care, such as organizing appointments, co-ordinating with other network members, and shopping are done at a distance and may be invisible to the recipient. These tasks provide access to services, although the bridging occurs on behalf of the senior rather than being initiated by the senior.

These data on network characteristics provide basic information on the context of care. Care networks are equally likely to be entirely male or female with only one third having both women and men. Given previous findings that women and men may provide different care tasks, this finding suggests the majority of networks could be limited in the breadth of their caring capability. The majority of networks are entirely close kin, with a small proportion that are distant kin. There are few mixed relationship networks, suggesting that families do not augment their caring resources with friends and neighbours. Rather, a small proportion of networks are entirely non-kin, suggesting that there may be a substitution of carers if families are unavailable.

Care networks tend to be homogeneous in terms of age categories of caregivers. Just 30 percent have mixed age membership. The largest category of networks has all members aged 45 to 64, a group likely to have labour force and other family work demands. The majority of networks is not home based but at a distance so members are travelling to provide care. Most networks have been caring for more than two years, underlining the chronic nature of care to seniors. The majority of networks also have some or all members in the labour force. In fact, approximately one third of networks have all members in the labour force leaving those members without the support of others who do not have the time and place demands of employment. The smallest proportion of networks has a mix of those who have employment roles and those who do not.

These patterns suggest potential differences in social capital among support and care networks. Support networks are larger and somewhat more diverse in membership than care networks. Thus, support networks may have the potential for different types or amounts of social capital than the more focused care networks.

Social Capital in Action: Activities of Support and Care Networks

The road map of the types of structures of networks of older adults presented in the previous section provides the basis for further discussion of the ways in which networks of older adults might enhance aging well. We turn now to an exploration of what networks do for seniors. Social capital language has not been used extensively in the literature on networks of older adults. However, the activities of networks may provide some indication of whether these networks serve bonding, bridging, or other functions.

Tasks Received by Seniors From Support Networks

As in the previous section, data come from a national survey of seniors in rural Canada (Dobbs et al., 2004). Respondents were asked to state whether they received assistance from others with each of 13 tasks, and the frequency of support received from each person who provided assistance with a particular task. Tasks include preparing shopping, transportation, meals, housekeeping, outdoor work, checking up, and emotional support among others.

Table 3: Types of Support Received from Support Networks (rural seniors in Canada)

Type of Support Received	Percent of Respondents Receiving Support
Checking up in person or telephone	55.7
Preparing meals	48.6
Housekeeping	35.9
Outdoor work	31.2
Shopping	22.2
Transportation-medical appointments	18.9
Watering plants, feeding pets, picking up mail	18.5
Financial matters	17.9
Emotional support	17.2
Transportation-social outings	14.3
Transportation-necessary errands	12.7
Making arrangements-information, appointments, services	6.1
Short break from providing care	3.3

Rural seniors receive a variety of types of support from other people (Table 3). The majority (55.7 percent) reported that others check up on them in person or by telephone to make sure they are OK. Nearly half stated that other people had prepared meals for them, dropped off homemade food, or invited them to dinner. A third of respondents received support with housekeeping, such as washing floors, vacuuming, dusting, laundry, or mending, and outdoor work, such as painting and minor repairs, shovelling snow, or chopping firewood. One in five rural seniors received assistance with shopping and transportation for medical appointments. The most common reason cited for receiving support with most tasks is "that's the way things are done" with family/friends. However, a common reason for receipt of support with housekeeping and to a lesser extent outdoor work is because of a long-term health problem, suggesting that the boundaries between support and care are blurred.

Type and Amount of Support Received by Seniors From Support and Care Networks

Do networks make a difference in the type or amount of support seniors receive? Given the assumption that context is important, it seems likely that support received by older adults will be influenced by their own characteristics as well as those of their support networks and the communities in which they live. Emphasis is placed on characteristics of older adults and of the communities in which they reside. To test these assumptions, analyses of support networks of rural Canadian seniors were conducted.

While networks influence the lives of older adults, characteristics of those older adults influence the composition of their social and support networks and, hence, the types and amount of support they receive. Characteristics of older adults that have been found to be related to support include age, gender, marital status, education, income, health status, length of time in the community, and driving status.

Age is an important determinant of social and support networks. Social networks of seniors over age 85 are smaller (Tijhuis et al., 1998) and more kin focused (Aartsen et al., 2004) than those of younger seniors, providing a narrower potential for support than social networks of younger seniors. Gender also influences network composition. Older women have more social network members than older men (Kim et al., 2000; Reinhardt et al., 2003) and larger support networks as a result of their wider variety of social roles. Being unmarried is associated with smaller network size, especially in cases of divorce (Uhlenberg and de Jong, 2004) though the smaller size of rural communities may facilitate network rebuilding.

Education, income, and health are also related to network characteristics. Higher education is associated with a greater number of ties with younger friends and neighbours (Uhlenberg and de Jong, 2004) and lower education with receipt of support from family (Reinhardt et al., 2003). Given their lower average education, rural seniors may have a higher proportion of kin in their support networks than urban seniors (Keating et al., 2001). Similarly, income is positively related to seniors' participation in activities that help build and maintain network ties, such as involvement in community groups (Pillemer and Glasgow, 2000), though those with lower income may receive more instrumental support from their networks in the absence of resources to purchase services. Those in poor health have fewer community connections (Zunzunegui et al., 2004) that help build non-kin relationships and may be more likely to have small, kin focused support networks. Finally, long-standing community residence and ability to drive both are associated with opportunities to create and maintain social ties that can lead to social support (Brown, 2002; Glasgow, 2000).

Community characteristics that frame the potential for support include population size, distance of the community from a service centre, and demographic mix. Small population size makes it more likely that older adults will be known by others (Keating et al., 2001), while distance from a service centre may foster support from network members in the absence of other alternatives (Keefe et al., 2004). Since age peers are important parts of the support networks of older adults, communities with higher proportions of seniors may be more supportive.

In sum, evidence to date is that the composition of support networks in combination with characteristics of the older adults and the community in which they live will influence the support they receive.

Recent Findings: Activities of Support and Care Networks

The majority of seniors in Canada (73 percent) reported receiving assistance with various tasks (Keating et al., 1999). Thus, most have support networks. Of these, 51 percent received support for everyday activities or a temporary life crisis such as bereavement. The remaining 22 percent received care from their networks as a result of their chronic health problems.

Further analyses of our data on support networks of rural seniors shows that different sets of individual and support network characteristics are associated with receipt of different types of tasks (Table 4). Those who are more likely to receive assistance with transportation are women, who are unmarried, in poorer health, and do not drive. They are more likely to receive help from networks that are predominantly male and medium size (three to four network members as opposed to smaller or larger networks). In contrast, those receiving support with household tasks, such as meals, housework, and shopping are older, do not drive, and have networks that are predominantly women and who live in the same household (as opposed to living in the same neighbourhood, community, or further away). Emotional support is more likely provided to those who are younger, unmarried, and in poorer health by networks that are entirely age 45 to 65. Finally, those receiving

Table 4: Predictors of Types of Support Received by Rural Seniors in Canada

Support Task	Predictors of Receipt of Task	
	Individual Characteristics	Support Network Characteristics
Transportation (for social, errands, medical)	female, unmarried, poorer health, do not drive	male network, medium size (3-4)
Household tasks (meals, housework, shopping)	older, do not drive	female network, co-resident
Emotional support (checking up, emotional, caregiving break)	younger, unmarried, poorer health	network members age 45-65
Practical support (making arrangements, providing financial assistance)	older, female, long-term resident of community	male network

Table 5: Predictors of Types of Care Received by Frail Seniors in Canada

Care task	Care Network Characteristics
Meals	female network, kin, not employed, caring 1-2 years, larger size
Housekeeping	female network, not employed, larger size
Home maintenance	male network, non-kin, 65 or younger, larger size
Shopping	female network, kin, mixed ages, same household or nearby, larger size
Transportation	female network, kin, ages 45 and older, same household or community, larger size
Finances	kin, ages 45 and older, same household, larger size
Personal care	female network, kin, larger size

practical support with tasks, such as helping make arrangements and providing financial assistance are older, women, have lived longer in the community, and have networks that are predominantly male. Notably, community characteristics did not influence whether a task was received.

In sum, age, gender, martial status, health, and driving status are the most important individual determinants of support received. Network characteristics most often associated with receipt of support are age composition, gender composition, and proximity.

The smaller, more intense networks that provide care to seniors with chronic health problems operate somewhat differently than do support networks. Table 5 provides information on the relationship between network characteristics and receipt of different care tasks. These findings provide a picture of how seniors differentially benefit by having networks of people with particular sets of characteristics. Receipt of different kinds of tasks can be useful to seniors in a variety of ways. Everyday tasks, such as meal preparation and housekeeping, are important in helping older adults manage in their home settings and may assist in the maintenance of neighbourhood and community connections. More intense tasks, such as personal care, make a great difference in delaying placement in residential care.

Characteristics that consistently make a difference in the likelihood that seniors will receive care tasks have higher proportions of women in their networks, higher proportions of kin, and larger network size. Notably, these three network characteristics alone determine whether seniors receive personal care. In contrast, there are no clear patterns suggesting that age composition makes a difference. Employment status reduces the likelihood of receiving assistance with everyday household tasks, but not personal care. When an intense task, such as personal care is required, networks with women, close kin, and larger numbers provide that task regardless of personal cost. Since these data are cross-sectional, we do not know how many networks "choose" one or more members to leave the labour force to provide care as needs escalate.

There has been no explicit exploration to date of the social capital inherent in care networks. However, it is clear that networks have big differences in resources. There are just as many networks with lone members as with four. And size makes a difference in terms of how much care and what variety of care is provided to care recipients. A minority have all women. Yet having an all-female network makes it far more likely that the care recipient will receive a variety of care tasks, including essentials such as meals, housekeeping, and personal care. Finally, equal proportions have all employed, none employed and mixed, though having a network of employed carers reduces the amount of care and number of care tasks received.

From the perspective of network members, resource differences may be experienced as high levels of strain in some networks as they struggle to meet competing demands of care and other paid and unpaid work. Network sustainability is an important concern in care to older adults and has been the focus of much recent policy development in determining how to provide respite to network members.

Community-Level Networks

Along with having personal networks, individuals may be part of the social, support, and/or care networks of other people. If individuals are members of more than one personal network, then these networks are, in effect, linked. When networks are linked together, the social capital of each network is also linked, providing additional access to resources for group members. This may result in greater social cohesion at the group level. However, cohesion is not always a positive dynamic, for a cohesive group can pressure members to conform, to the exclusion of others or to the detriment of the broader group (Jenson, 1998). Yet, it is from social cohesion that collective action potentially may arise (MacInko and Starfield, 2001; Narayan, 1999; White, 2002). In a community context, networks within a physical setting may be linked providing access to resources for the broader community group. The more extensive the ties between networks, the more cohesive the community. Community is not conceptually dependent on physical location (Wellman, 1999). There may be networks, or groups of networks, that are geographically dispersed across the country, that are linked through shared values, goals, and commitments. The social cohesion of the broad group will determine the overall social capital distributed across the group.

Recent Findings on Community-Level Support

In the past two years, we have been engaged in a project in which we are trying to better understand what makes communities supportive to the older adults who live there. Part of our approach has been to conduct community-level analyses of rural communities (Keefe et al., 2004). Using the 2001 Census of Canada, we developed a rough proxy for community-level supportiveness which is the proportion of people in the community who said they had helped a senior in the previous month. We found that rural communities differed considerably in supportiveness from less than one percent to more than 50 percent of community members reporting having helped a senior. This is compelling evidence against the assumption that rural communities are all close-knit and caring and thus good sources of social capital for older adults who live there.

Of all community characteristics considered, four emerged as most important in discriminating among levels of community supportiveness. Highly supportive communities are relatively small in size, have higher proportions of older adults and of long-term residents, and are typified by relatively higher hours of unpaid work done by residents. Together, these characteristics provide a picture of communities in which people may have grown old together, have strong support networks, are known to community members, and in which there is a strong ethic of helping. These findings suggest that smaller communities may actually be tight-knit, where dense ties bridge networks, creating a cohesive community group. As many people have lived in the community for a long time, they have had the opportunity to maintain and build network ties with a variety of other people in the community. This bridging of networks may make the group more cohesive, increasing the social capital available in the community. Indeed, residing in a cohesive community may provide individuals with access to resources, even when personal networks are lacking.

APPENDIX C: DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF SENIORS LIVING IN RURAL COMMUNITIES

Legion Sample Compared to 2002 General Social Survey

Demographic Characteristic	Legion Rural Seniors (N=1322)		GSS 2002 Rural Seniors	
	Gender (%)		Gender (%)	
	Female	Male	Female	Male
Age				
65 – 74	47.6	47.1	56.8	62.7
75+	52.4	52.9	43.2	37.3
Marital status				
Married/common-law	79.9	75.2	50.2	79.3
Widowed	17.8	15.0	42.3	10.3
Separated/divorced/singled	2.3	9.7	7.4	10.3
Highest level of formal education				
Elementary school or less	24.8	35.3	22.5	29.3
Secondary school	43.5	38.7	48.9	37.6
Post-secondary degree, certificate/diploma	29.5	20.9	27.5	30.0
Graduate degree	2.3	5.2	1.2	3.1
Income				
0 to $14,999	26.4	9.9	37.0	17.7
$15,000 to $29,999	39.3	36.4	15.1	25.7
$30,000 to $49,999	23.9	39.5	4.8	13.2
$50,000 and greater	10.4	14.2	1.6	7.0
Employment status				
Not employed/retired	96.5	92.1	96.6	88.1
Employed	3.5	7.9	3.4	11.9

Note: Results are from (unpublished) analysis of the 2002 General Social Survey (GSS). Income data from the GSS have 39 percent missing values. Results must be treated with caution.

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Notes

1 This section was written by Norah Keating.

2 A caveat about the comparability of these data is important. The information on social and support networks is from rural seniors in Canada. The sample is of members of the Royal Canadian Legion and their spouses. The sample was chosen to represent equal proportions of women and men, older and younger seniors. In contrast, the information on care networks is from all older Canadians who reported receiving assistance from family and friends, because of a long-term health problem.

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Commentary on "The Role of Social Capital in Aging Well"

Claude Rocan, Public Health Agency of Canada

Health promotion in general, and health promotion for seniors in particular, has always implicitly sought to effect positive health outcomes through the mobilization of social capital. Yet, as Keating, Swindle, and Foster note, the conceptual framework for research and intervention drew on other constructs such as social networks, social support, and social participation. Knowing that networks mattered, federal community programs for seniors have funded projects for over 30 years to foster social participation to enhance seniors' well-being, as well as to use social networks to provide health information and support positive behaviour change. But these programs never undertook to understand what types of social bonds served which health goals, nor to measure how well they achieved them.

Applying the new construct of social capital to our old models can make a difference to the way the Public Health Agency of Canada promotes healthy aging. To quote Marcel Proust, "Discovery lies not in exploring new landscapes but in seeing existing ones with new eyes." The differentiation among social network types and their linkages to seniors' health has policy significance in an aging society. Demographic aging implies that there will be more older adults and that they will live longer; thus, there will be a greater demand for targeted aging and seniors health policies in the coming decades to respond to the increase in the numbers of younger seniors (the baby boomers) and very elderly seniors. To plan for increasingly diverse health needs, the Public Health Agency of Canada has used the World Health Organization's Active Ageing life course framework to articulate the goals of healthy aging policy. These goals are to promote optimum physical and mental health, maintain and restore functional capacity, and enhance quality of life. Different types of social networks maybe harnessed to serve these different health goals.

Because the social capital approach to seniors' health is new, the evidence base should be solidified to identify effective approaches to foster specific kinds of health-promoting bonds. National health and social data should be examined from a social capital lens to determine relationships with seniors' health, and more research focused on social capital dimensions of seniors' health should be undertaken. The Agency is developing broad evaluation frameworks and indicators to better evaluate community health intervention; in this context, it is important to incorporate social capital within program logic models and to measure it in relation to health outcomes.

The Agency's community funding is designed to develop and pilot model programs to promote health which could be sustained by the community. Applying a social capital lens in program evaluation can show how mobilizing formal and informal networks can affect health outcomes. These lessons in and of themselves can serve the broader community and health policy generally. Community programs which show how different sectors unused to working together can be linked successfully to improve seniors' health could provide local directions for intersectoral co-ordination that is required in an aging society. At an operational level, the sustainability of programs once federal funding has ended may be tied to the social capital that has been developed. In sum, the Keating et al. analysis of social capital in relation to aging well shows the value of this lens in seniors' health. The Public Health Agency of Canada plans to use the social capital lens to better understand how social relations of all kinds affect seniors' health and to examine the effectiveness (and appropriateness) of policy interventions in supporting these relations.

Commentary on "The Role of Social Capital in Aging Well"

Siobhan Harty, Social Development Canada

Social capital is a concept that has covered a lot of miles in academic and policy circles of late. While the assumption underlying the concept is not new – social networks matter – the range of posited outcomes of social capital has expanded significantly as researchers and policy makers test its boundaries and applications. In this context, Social Development Canada welcomes the opportunity to comment on a paper whose topic is so central to our current priorities.

While the frontiers of social capital literature have expanded considerably of late, the role of government in supporting and investing in social capital is still a question that is the subject of some debate. In commissioning a series of papers that focus on key policy areas, the PRI has made it considerably easier for policy makers to begin to address the question of the role of government. The paper by Norah Keating, Jennifer Swindle, and Deborah Foster, *The Role of Social Capital in Aging Well*, takes this debate into a policy area that is of strong interest to Canadians, given the aging of our population. Their thoughtful and analytical paper raises questions not only about the role of social capital in aging well, but in social policy more generally. There is much to reflect on in their paper but three points in particular are of interest to Social Development Canada and to its role in supporting The Honourable Tony Ianno, the Minister of State for Families and Caregivers.

Care is Intergenerational

Social capital is a relational concept that rests on foundations of reciprocity and trust, each of which is fundamental to the provision of care. As we age, we expect and hope that our children will take care of us just as we took care of them in their early years: the bonds of kinship are (more often than not) infused with trust. But this expectation cannot always be met for various reasons – our adult children have work and other family commitments, they live far away, or they have a disability or illness. In these cases, and perhaps in others, we might expect governments to intervene with some form of assistance. The policy rationale for governments to do so is much the same as that which underlies arguments in favour of institutionalized child care: increasingly, families find it difficult to provide care across generations. As Keating et al. make clear, providing care for an elderly or infirm relative can often stress the very support networks that are sources of care, straining relations with those we love in the process. Providing care for elderly or infirm relatives can tax us physically, drain us emotionally, and cost us materially. Governments recognize the costs and challenges of caregiving for young children and have responded with a range of measures and programs. As our population ages, the challenges of providing care to elderly relatives will need to be given more consideration.

Networks are Sources of Change

There are many different forms of social capital but for the purposes of aging well, bonding social capital appears to be the most important. Bonding social capital refers to the strong relations in homogenous groups, such as families, that provide us with the support we need on a daily basis. However, bridging social capital, which is more heterogeneous and characterized by weak ties, is also important for aging well. Although there has been little discussion in the literature of how this might be the case, the answer is provided in Keating's own model of the contexts of social capital for older adults (personal-community-policy), which she argues seniors have the ability to influence. Much has been written about the "grey power" of Canada's baby boomers as they age: as this cohort seeks to influence and shape public policy to respond to its evolving needs, it will work in the community and policy contexts by drawing on bridging social capital, which will connect them to the external assets that will help them get ahead. If tomorrow's seniors are as healthy as we expect them to be, they might well have the energy to invest in new networks that will connect them with advocates and policy makers. Canada's seniors are likely to shape the caregiving agenda as much – if not more – than caregivers themselves.

Networks Change

Even if today's older Canadians are healthier than previous cohorts, it is inevitable that their social networks will shrink as they approach the end of their life. A discussion of aging and social capital is useful for pointing out something that is very rarely discussed – let alone analyzed – in the literature on social capital: networks change. It is not just that individuals change their networks – due to moves, career changes, or marriage – but the networks themselves can change through natural causes. As our society ages, this is an important reality to keep in mind in discussions about the well-being of seniors. Programs, such as Social Development Canada's New Horizons, seek to ensure that seniors do not face social exclusion by supporting projects that encourage seniors to continue to play an important role in their communities. Many of the New Horizons projects implicitly recognize that as Canadians age, their access to networks other than family is limited. So, the projects seek to fill this gap by, for example, focusing on intergenerational exchanges between seniors and young Canadians.

These are just three examples of how considerations of social capital might influence policy makers in responding to the needs of care recipients and caregivers in Canada. Keating, Swindle, and Foster are to be congratulated for putting us on the right path to identifying the parameters for further discussions and research. Their work can inform the development of a comprehensive caregivers strategy for the Government of Canada, led by Social Development Canada.

ORIENTING NEWCOMERS TO CANADIAN SOCIETY: SOCIAL CAPITAL AND SETTLEMENT

Jean Lock Kunz[1], Policy Research Initiative

Introduction

Social capital remains one of the most popular sociological terms in everyday language (Portes, 1998). Interest in social capital has exploded over the past decade, first in academic and then in policy circles. Discussions fall into three broad streams: conceptualization, measurement and, more recently, policy applications. This paper examines the role of social capital in the settlement and integration of newcomers to Canada, an important policy area of the Government of Canada. Specifically, it attempts to answer three questions.

- Does social capital, defined as social networks, play a role in immigrant integration?
- Does social capital lead to better settlement and integration outcomes for immigrants and for the receiving society in general?
- Can settlement programs facilitate the social and economic integration of newcomers through the formation of social networks between newcomers and their receiving communities?

This paper first situates social capital in the context of immigrant integration, particularly settlement. It then identifies and analyzes elements of social capital inherent in current federally funded settlement programs (PRI, 2004). This paper does not review or evaluate the merits of existing programs, nor does it purport to present a comprehensive review of studies on immigrant integration.

A Word about Social Capital

Sociologists have been familiar with the concept of social capital for decades. More recently, it has also gained favour among political scientists, economists, and other social scientists. That said, a common definition of social capital remains elusive. Definitions include trust, norms, values and, more commonly, networks. In my view, the research question at hand should guide the definition chosen. This paper employs a network-based approach, that is, social capital consists of "networks of social relations that provide access to needed resources and supports" (PRI, 2003). Such an approach does not exclude the trust and norms elements of social capital. Relations are often built on trust, shared norms, and values.

A key characteristic of social capital is that it exists in relations among individuals and groups (Coleman, 1988). It is reciprocal and purposeful (Portes and Sensenbrenner, 1993). Two types of social capital are described in most social capital literature: networks that help individuals get by (bonding) and those that enable individuals to get ahead (bridging) in life (Woolcock, 2000). Bonding networks include family, friends, and those of similar ethnic, cultural, and socio-economic status. These are ties that bind individuals together. By comparison, bridging networks are often forged between individuals of different social, economic, and cultural backgrounds. Though not as strong as the bonding networks, these ties enable individuals to access resources otherwise unavailable to them. As a form of capital, bridges include debits and credits. Individuals must continually invest or cultivate social relations to draw on these social credits in times of need (Li, 2004). Further, as in capital investment, the returns to social capital are assessed both in the short and long term.

Setting the Context

Newcomers to Canada

Canada is a country of immigration. Among OECD countries, it has the second highest proportion of foreign-born permanent residents in its population, after Australia (Statistics Canada, 2003a). Over the past decade, around 200,000 people become landed immigrants in Canada each year. They come for various reasons: to search for better economic opportunities, reunite with family, and escape from political and civil unrest back home. Canada accepts immigrants[2] under three broad categories: family, economic, and refugee. In recent years, a majority of immigrants (and their dependants) have been admitted as skilled workers under the economic class, followed by those who came to reunite with families. Refugees comprise the third group, admitted through government or private sponsorship, or successfully claimed refugee status in Canada and received permanent resident status. A majority of immigrants settle in large urban centres especially Montréal, Toronto, and Vancouver. China remains the top source country of immigrants followed by India, Pakistan, the Philippines, and South Korea (CIC, 2003a).

Successful integration benefits Canadian society and the immigrants themselves. Immigrants form a vital part of the Canadian society and economy. This increasingly well-educated population accounts for 20 percent of the labour force (CIC, 2003b). Yet, in spite of the high education level among recent immigrants, studies consistently show the decline in economic well-being among recent immigrants (Picot and Hou, 2003). Explanations put forth for this deterioration include the macro-economic condition, a depreciation in foreign credentials, non-recognition of foreign work experience, and language competency (Picot, 2004). Some have also argued that while recognition of foreign credentials remains important, it is through networks that immigrants expand their social and economic opportunities in the receiving country (Kunz, 2003).

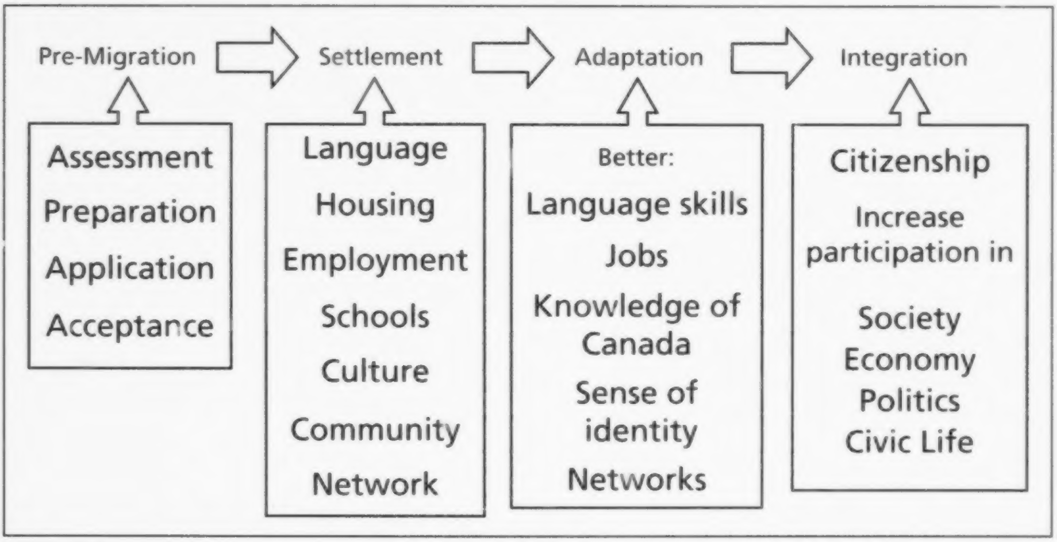
The Migration Process

Regardless of category of admission or place of destination, newcomers usually go through an acculturation process whereby they orient themselves to the new society and eventually find their place in it. Starting anew in an environment different from one's own is one of the stressful transitions along the life course. Such stress could be alleviated through the support of family and communities, and with the resilience of the individual.

The process of transplanting from one country to another occurs in several stages from preparation before migration to settlement, adaptation, and integration after landing (Canadian Council for Refugees, 1998; Frank and Kunz, 2004). (Integration is here referred to as the full participation of immigrants in the receiving society. It does not imply that immigrants are to be "assimilated" into the mainstream society.) With the exception of refugees, potential migrants often prepare themselves, to the extent possible, for this transition. While preparing or waiting for their applications to be processed, migrants often learn about the culture and customs of their prospective country of destination, improve their language skills, save for expenditures during the initial months after migration, and contact relevant organizations in the receiving country for information.

A couple of characteristics are associated with this process. First and foremost, it is a two-way relationship rather than one on which immigrants bear the sole responsibility or reap the benefits. To illustrate, think about what happens if immigrants come here, learn the language, and familiarize themselves with the Canadian way of living only to find they are unable to participate fully in Canadian society or they are discriminated against by fellow Canadians.

Sample Life–Course Transition of an Adult Immigrant with Family



Second, the multiplicity of actors implicated under the dual umbrellas of newcomers and receiving society include the immigrant community, institutions of the receiving society, and members of the receiving society. It is, therefore, a process that occurs at not only the individual level, but also at the institutional and collective levels.

Third, it occurs in all domains of life: economic, social, cultural, civic, and political. Economic integration and participation receive the bulk of attention from policy makers in Canada, because of the country's need for skilled workers and the deterioration of economic performance among recent immigrants. Arguably, finding a job is a critical part of settlement and integration. Individuals however do not live in their offices and work sites only. Newcomers need to find housing, a welcoming and safe community, school for their children, and acclimatize to all aspects of Canadian life. They interact with people in their neighbourhoods and schools, and at community functions. Not only are they our co-workers, immigrants are also our neighbours, clients, partners in sports and voluntary activities, friends, and acquaintances.

From preparation to integration, each stage requires various resources on the part of (potential) immigrants and the social institutions with which they interact. How well they fair in each stage will have implications for the subsequent stage(s). For example, some people may decide to return to their home country for lack of suitable employment prospects in the country of destination and improving economic prospects back home.

It is the settlement stage that is of interest to this paper. On arrival, newcomers must orient themselves to the new environment. Culture shock is one of the staple terms in the lexicon of acculturation research. This occurs when newcomers are first exposed to the receiving society and, later, at the adaptation stage as they develop a deeper understanding of the receiving society and their place in it (Isajiw, 1999). Cultural shock is mediated through newcomers' encounters with individuals and institutions in the receiving society to meet their needs for financial, physical, and emotional security. These needs include (Realworld, 2004):

- jobs;
- housing;
- a community that is welcoming;
- an environment where children can be safe, healthy, and well-educated;
- friends who can help them get by and get ahead;
- accurate information that enables them to find jobs, housing, schools, as well as other health and social services; and
- language proficiency since most come from countries whose official language is neither English nor French.

Social Capital, Settlement, and Integration

Can some settlement needs be met through social capital? According to initial results from the Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Canada (LSIC), the answer is a qualified yes (Ruddick, 2003). A large majority (87 percent) reported relatives and/or friends in Canada at the time of arrival, and this fact is reflected in their decision to choose to immigrate to Canada, their choice of place of residence in Canada, and their sources of settlement assistance. If we focus on the most important single reason reported by the immigrants for choosing to immigrate to Canada, maintaining ties with family and close friends was important in the decision for one in three immigrants – join family/friends (27 percent), accompany family/friends (4 percent), and getting married (3 percent). Hopes for a better future for the family (30 percent), and better education opportunities (11 percent) also ranked highly. Overall, immigrants cited two main reasons for choosing to locate in a given census metropolitan area. First was the presence of family or friends. Forty-one percent reported that the choice of their destination was based on the fact that they had family at this location; 18 percent chose the area because they had friends living there. The second motive most frequently cited as the most important reason behind destination choice was job opportunities. After six months, more than 80 percent of newcomers live in the same city as their relatives or friends (Statistics Canada, 2003b).

Friends and relatives are key sources of support to help immigrants with settlement difficulties in the areas of housing, training/education, job search, and access to help services. As shown in Table 1, within six months of their arrival, friends by far are the most frequently mentioned sources of assistance when it comes to finding housing. Around a third of the newcomers reported getting help from friends regarding health care, education, and employment. Family and friends remain the second most mentioned source of help, followed by settlement organizations, educational institutions, and others (CIC, 2004). Newcomers likely find out about formal supports, such as settlement organizations, health services, and schools, from their relatives and friends, or through reception services funded by CIC.

Table 1: Top Three Sources of Help Newcomers Used When Encountered a Problem

	1	2	3
Access health services	Relatives/family members (38%)	Friends (37%)	Health workers (15%)
Find housing	Friends (63%)	Relatives/family members (22%)	Settlement organizations (11%)
Further education	Friends (35%)	Relatives/family members (32%)	School, college, university (32%)
Find a job	Friends (36%)	Relatives/family members (26%)	Settlement organizations (21%)

Source: LSIC, Citizenship and Immigration Canada, Priorities, Planning and Research.

Table 1 clearly demonstrates the influence of social capital in one's settlement experience. It is reasonable to expect that newcomers are likely to have friends of the same ethnic origin when they first arrive. The diversity of networks of newcomers is not clear from the initial results of the LSIC. Obviously, bonding networks help newcomers get by as they acclimatize to the new environment. In the long run, how these individuals get ahead in Canadian society depends on the diversity of their networks. Questions, such as the following, could be addressed in waves two or three of the LSIC.

- Are newcomers able to develop relationships with people outside their ethnic group at work, school, or in their neighbourhood?
- Compared to those with a more homogeneous circle of friends, do newcomers with a more heterogeneous social network fare better in employment and at school?
- Do newcomers who received help from an individual or family in the receiving community have a more positive settlement experience and, therefore, more active involvement in Canadian society and economy than others?

Numerous studies have been devoted to the role of networks in the well-being of immigrants and ethnic groups. Based on an extensive review of existing literature, Li (2004) identified four common hypotheses: ethnic attachment, ethnic mobility entrapment, ethnic enclave economy, and ethnic transnationalism. Two hypotheses have direct relevance to this study: ethnic attachment and ethnic entrapment. Through generations of migration, certain ethnic groups are able to establish their own institutions parallel to those in mainstream society; hence the term, "institutional completeness" (Breton, 1964). These institutions help newcomer co-ethnics in their initial stage of settlement while enabling more established immigrants to maintain their cultural identity. There are many ways to maintain one's cultural identity, including language retention, ethnic networks, and affiliating with ethnic-specific organizations. Strong bonding social capital could be both positive and negative for newcomers. Ethnic attachment, for example, often carries an economic cost in terms of earnings and upward mobility.

Strong bonding networks could hinder upward mobility in the mainstream society, especially if the individual belongs to an ethnic minority group. Immigrants who maintain close ties with their own ethnic groups tend to have lower earnings than others (Reitz and Sklar, 1997). A study by Sanders et al. (2002) of Asian immigrants in the United Statues showed that co-ethnic networks are useful mostly in finding low-paying jobs whereas social ties outside one's ethnic network facilitate entry to jobs in mainstream society. Hence, who you know matters. In general, the longer one stays in the country, the more heterogeneous the network. Inter-ethnic networks, or bridging social capital, are important in immigrants' job searches especially for ethnic groups who, on average, do not have high socio-economic status. A study of five ethnic groups in Toronto by Ooka and Wellman (2003) showed that those who obtained jobs through inter-ethnic contacts had higher income than those who used intra-ethnic contacts, especially for women. Intra-ethnic contacts could lead to higher earning jobs for ethnic groups who have already obtained high socio-economic status in society, such as northern and western Europeans. These studies suggest social capital is distributed unequally across social class and ethnicity. Individuals tend to have friends and acquaintances of the same social standing. Consequently, immigrants who belong to ethnic minorities are less likely to break into the old boys (girls) club, because most of them are non-white and of lower socio-economic status.

In November 2003, the PRI, in partnership with the OECD and other federal departments and agencies, held an international conference on the role of social capital in immigrant integration and managing diversity. At the conference, participants demonstrated the value of social capital in facilitating the integration of immigrants and in responding to a culturally diverse society. Many of the discussions, however, remained on the conceptual level (Burstein, 2004). The conference also highlighted a number of settlement programs financially supported by Citizenship and Immigration Canada, one of which has the explicit goal of building relations between newcomers and the Canadian-born or more established immigrants.

Current Programs for Assisting Settlement of Newcomers

In a 2003 report by the Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration, three areas were identified as key in the integration of newcomers: language training, access to employment, and welcoming communities. These three areas are interrelated. Language competency is a determining factor in access to employment (Environics, 2004) and helps newcomers participate in their receiving communities. A welcoming community implies that the receiving society needs to do its part to appreciate the value of immigration. Otherwise, immigrants would remain outsiders in spite of their language skills and credentials.

The Government of Canada, mainly through Citizenship and Immigration Canada, supports and promotes newcomer settlement and integration through a number of programs. The Department spent approximately $367 million in 2003-2004 to support the settlement, adaptation, and integration of newcomers into Canadian society. In all provinces and territories, with the exception of Manitoba, Quebec, and British Columbia, settlement programs are implemented by CIC. Three main funding programs are in place: the Immigrant Settlement and Adaptation Program (ISAP), Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC), and the Host Program. Services are delivered, with funding from CIC, by over 230 service provider organizations, which provide services in a local context-specific manner that is most effective in meeting both short- and long-term goals. Manitoba, Quebec, and British Columbia receive transfer payments from CIC to manage and deliver comparable settlement programming (CIC, 2003c).

ISAP: Responding to Immediate Settlement Needs

The ISAP "assist(s) immigrants in settling and integrating into Canadian society" (CIC, 2000). Approximately $36.7 million was spent in fiscal year 2003-2004 to this program for the delivery of the following services:

- referral to economic, social, health, cultural, educational and recreational services;
- tips on banking, shopping, managing a household, and other everyday tasks;
- interpreters or translators, if necessary;
- non-therapeutic counselling; and
- assistance in résumé writing and job-searching skills.

Enhanced Language Training, a component under ISAP, offers advanced language instruction for immigrants destined for the labour market. It also includes a mentoring and job placement component.

LINC: Improving Language Competency of Adult Newcomers

Known as LINC in most provinces, the program offers free language training in English or French to newcomers for up to three years. Approximately $92.7 million was spent in fiscal year 2003-2004 for LINC. Citizenship and Immigration Canada manages LINC in co-operation with provincial governments, school boards, community colleges, and immigrant and community organizations. In addition to language skills, LINC curriculums include materials that familiarize participants with Canadian society. More recently, Enhanced Language Training, a component under ISAP, offers advanced language instruction for immigrants destined for the labour market.

Host: Fostering Networks between Newcomers and the Receiving Community

Of all the programs, Host has the least funding allocated ($2.9 million for fiscal year 2003-2004). It matches newcomers (or their family) with a volunteer who is either Canadian-born or a permanent resident. According to the program description, Host

> helps immigrants overcome the stress of moving to a new country. Volunteers familiar with Canadian ways help newcomers learn about available services and how to use them, practice English and French, get contacts in their field of work and participate in the

> community. At the same time, host Canadians learn about new cultures, other lands and different languages; they make new friends and they strengthen community life (CIC, 1997).

The service providing organizations running Host programs promote Host, recruit, select, and train volunteer hosts, match hosts with newcomers based on shared interests, monitor progress, and evaluate the program. Through the training program, volunteer hosts learn about their rights and responsibilities, factors associated with relocation and cross-cultural communication. Hosts are also advised on activities they could do with newcomers, and of available support. The role of volunteers is to ease the cultural shock newcomers experience following relocation. Volunteers may assist newcomers in day-to-day activities, such as banking, shopping, budgeting, using the transit system, accessing other public services, registering for school, learning about income tax, getting a driver's licence, and so on. More important, volunteers may introduce newcomers to their network of friends and family through social activities.

These three settlement programs all aim to reduce the culture shock associated with the initial stage of migration. A number of settlement needs, such as access to social services and job search assistance, could be met through the ISAP. The relationship between settlement workers and newcomers can be likened to that of service providers and clients. Similarly, LINC has one goal: enabling newcomers to attain a prescribed level of language competency as defined by the Canadian Language Benchmarks.[3] The relationship between LINC teachers and newcomers is that of teacher-student. Of the three programs, Host aligns most closely with the third key area mentioned above: building welcoming communities. There could be networking among LINC students who are all in the same situation, and there may be some information sharing. Developing networks and friendships, however, is a secondary by-product to these programs.

In comparison, friendship, mutual understanding, and adaptation of a new community are primary outcomes for Host. The model of Host is built on one of the underpinnings of CIC's settlement program, that is, integration is a two-way street. As such, mutual interests between newcomers and long-time residents are the focus. The idea is to build weak ties or bridging capital at least for the duration of the program. Unlike settlement workers and language instructors in ISAP and LINC, hosts are volunteers who receive no financial support other than training[4].

Social Capital and Host

In 2001, excluding Quebec, Manitoba and British Columbia, there were about 3,700 newcomer-host matches (CIC, 2003d). Begun in early 1980 in response to the needs of Indo-Chinese refugees, Host has evolved over the years, as has the profile of its clients (newcomers) in large urban centres, such as Toronto. In the late 1980s, most clients were refugees while in 2002, most were independent immigrants. This is not surprising given the rise in skilled worker immigrants over the past decade. These individuals usually have fewer family ties. Alternatively, they may be more aware of the settlement assistance available to them. Newcomers participate in the program to acclimatize themselves to the receiving society by having friends outside their ethnic group. Not all volunteer hosts are Canadian-born. Some are immigrants themselves who have experienced the settlement process. Helping newcomers is the most mentioned reason for volunteering. To some extent, the hosts also want to learn about other cultures and empathize with newcomers. The following two examples in a paper by CIC (2003e) illustrate the dynamics of newcomer-host relations.

Case Study 1: Claire and Alba (1988)

Claire was a middle-class volunteer host matched with a single mother, Alba, and her three teenagers, all of whom had no English language skills. Although there was a plan for another volunteer host, Claire declined, as she felt comfortable befriending the entire family.

As may be reasonably expected, the first meeting of the host and newcomer was greeted with great trepidation. The agency interpreter had arranged to meet the volunteer at the newcomer's apartment. Alba prepared for the meeting by inviting eight neighbours from the same ethnic background whom she had recently befriended. However, as the meeting progressed, Alba's fears subsided. And the interpreter arranged the second meeting.

Trust was established quickly as friendship blossomed between Claire and Alba's family. They met once or twice weekly, and Claire acted as Alba's advocate with her employers and landlord. Claire started taking Spanish courses and their communication quickly moved beyond body language. Their conversation was held typically half in Spanish and half in English, and language skills on both sides grew. Furthermore, Claire had been called upon by all members of the family for advice on issues ranging from parenting and food, to interaction with various institutions. Alba's family participated in Claire's social network and visited her cottage. They shared Christmas dinners and attended the weddings of each other's children.

It is reasonable to state that the newcomers learned to see Canadian society through Claire's value system. Although the teenagers are now adults integrated into the Canadian society, Claire remains an esteemed family friend whose advice continues to be sought.

It is worth noting that Claire remains Alba's only good friend outside of Alba's ethnic community. Had Host not existed, Alba would likely not have any friends outside of her ethnic circle and have much less understanding of Canadian values, norms, and institutions.

Case Study 2: Sandra and Mary (2003)

Mary is an immigrant in full-time attendance at a university graduate program. A service provider agency matched her with Sandra. Sandra is also a graduate student and had travelled and worked in foreign countries.

Mary has been in Canada for two years, and despite her efforts, found it difficult to establish friendships with native Canadians due to language and cultural barriers. However, she has no shortage of friends from China who she has met as neighbours or in church. Therefore, she is thrilled about having befriended Sandra who is very open and warm, and is exactly what she expects in a "typical" Canadian.

Sandra meets with Mary weekly to practise and improve English pronunciation and understand the context of words, to discuss Mary's papers, and talk about husbands, educating children, job prospects after graduation, the Canadian lifestyle and festivals, going to movies, and so on. Sandra encourages Mary to take risks, such as undertaking new activities and seeing movies she would not have chosen on her own. Mary definitely places a level of trust in Sandra.

Why volunteer? Sandra explained: "I have travelled, and feel fortunate to be Canadian. Having new friends with different perspectives helps me appreciate my country better." Sandra feels she is the bigger benefactor in the relationship. She is practising some Chinese as well, and enjoys the food Mary makes. Due to her busy schedule, she has yet to introduce the newcomers to her own friends, and her own family is not in Toronto. She finds Mary very committed to being part of Canada, learning about the parliamentary system and voting. Despite their busy schedules, both parties are learning so much from each other that they feel that their friendship will continue beyond the prescribed Host period.

Analysis

Canada being a traditional immigrant-receiving country, newcomers can easily find friends of the same ethnic background especially in large urban centres. Mary already had a network of friends mostly from China. She could probably get most of her daily necessities through the well-established Chinese communities and businesses. Through Host, however, she was able to develop networks outside her ethnic community. She also learned about Canadian culture and lifestyle.

Host also, to the extent possible, enables Canadian hosts to know more about newcomers. Both cases demonstrate a level of reciprocity between the host and the newcomer. Language and culture seemed to be a focal point of communication. In the case of Claire and Alba, it was English and Spanish, and for Sandra and Mary, English and Chinese. Neither Alba nor Mary seemed to place specific expectations on their hosts in terms of job search or other tangible outcomes. For both newcomers, they simply wanted to know Canadians, i.e., individuals outside their respective ethnic community. For the volunteer hosts, they welcomed the newcomers by empathizing with them and encouraging them to participate in Canadian society.

The relationships seem to extend beyond the duration of the program. Yet, did Host enable the newcomers or the host volunteers to develop more intra-ethnic ties other than the ones from the program? Neither Alba nor Mary appeared to have friends outside their ethnic community, except for their hosts. While both are able to develop friendships outside their own ethnic network through Host, it is more important to see whether such relationships spill over beyond the program.

Appreciating Host: Policy and Research Implications

One recommendation by the Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration (2003: 16) is that "Citizenship and Immigration Canada should facilitate the active involvement of members of the local community in the settlement and integration process," because a community receptive to newcomers is good for retention of immigrants, especially in areas of low immigration. Host, as pointed out in CIC's response to this recommendation, directly addresses this issue.

All three settlement programs are to be monitored and evaluated on a regular basis under the Contribution Accountability Framework (CAF) (CIC, 2003c). Quantitative data, collected through the Immigration-Contribution Accountability Measurement System (iCAMS), provides quantitative information on services delivered by agencies.

In addition, each program is evaluated qualitatively. These evaluations provide in-depth analysis of service quality, client satisfaction, program design, and management factors. They centre on three key questions:

- Do the programs meet their objectives?
- Are they appropriate and accessible to the clients?
- Have the programs achieved their desired outcome for both newcomers and the host society in the short, medium and long term?

Key indicators of Host include appropriate host-newcomer matching, and whether the program results in mutual understanding between newcomers and the receiving community. As shown in the logic model (Appendix 1) for Host, the immediate outcomes include public awareness of the program by both newcomers and potential volunteers, adequacy of training for volunteer hosts, the appropriateness of the activities engaged in by the hosts and newcomers, newcomers understanding their roles and responsibilities, and the extent to which the two-way interaction results in newcomers being more aware of Canadian culture and hosts more knowledgeable of other cultures. The intermediate outcomes include host communities being welcoming to newcomers and newcomers being able to participate in the networks of their communities. Obviously, the long-term objective is to develop communities where newcomers are welcomed and newcomers are able to contribute to their receiving community by fully participating in all aspects of Canadian society.

Three of the outcome measures address social capital building specifically (Kerr, 2004).

- To what extent are newcomers and members of host communities engaged in diverse social networks (e.g., the percentage of newcomers and hosts who report friendships and contacts outside their ethno-cultural community, and the number or percentage of schools reporting ethnocultural diversity among student social groups).
- To what extent are newcomers engaged in the social network of their host?
- Do newcomers experience social support and friendship through the program?

Does Host facilitate social capital building and, by so doing, complement other settlement programs? Evaluations have been conducted in the CIC Ontario region. Given that the province receives over half of the annual flow of immigrants, the results could shed light on similar programs elsewhere. Overall, the Ontario evaluation found Host to be a cost-effective program complementary to other settlement programs, such as ISAP and LINC.

A survey of Host participants in Ontario showed that almost all (97 percent) of the newcomers considered their host a friend (Power Analysis, 2003). Further, 89 percent of the hosts had or intended to maintain contact with their newcomers after the prescribed matching period. Newcomers joined Host primarily to practise English, learn about Canadian culture, and discuss settlement problems. Hosts volunteer primarily to help newcomers and learn about other cultures. Practising English is the second most mentioned activity, after meeting for coffee or just to talk. Arguably, English is likely the language of communication in these informal gatherings.

In Quebec, the twinning or Jumelage program operates in the same way as Host, pairing newcomers with a local host. Three models of matching are identified: volunteer work, intervention, and mutual aid (Charbonneau and Laaroussi, 2003). The first two are mostly found in smaller communities. In the volunteer-work model, the hosts are often retirees who view their involvement as one-way volunteer work where they provide help to immigrants in need. They have little interest in building linkages with newcomers beyond settlement assistance. Hosts in the intervention model see themselves as ambassadors of Quebec culture. Accordingly, they set out to educate newcomers about the Quebecois way of life. Under such assumptions, the interaction is one way, with newcomers expected to be assimilated to the local culture. Only in the mutual-aid model, common in large cities, is there a sense of equality and reciprocity between the two parties.

The motivation of volunteer hosts influences the type and outcome of host-newcomer relationships. Take the volunteer-work model in Jumelage, for example, hosts volunteer out of social or moral obligation. Newcomers are assumed to be on the take and have little to offer in return. The relationship is asymmetrical in terms of who gives and who receives. That being said, we should not completely dismiss the volunteer-work model. Granted, in the initial settlement phase, newcomers possibly have less to offer than do their hosts. Yet, if we consider social capital as a form of capital, sometimes the return on investment may not be realized for many years. As illustrated in the next example, the relationship between host and newcomer could change over time and the roles of giver and receiver may be reversed.

Case Study 3: The Has and the Retzlaffs: The Table Has Turned

As part of the wave of boat people from Vietnam (Jimenez, 2004), Dr. and Mrs. Ha came to Saskatoon with two young children. Their sponsors were a group of Mennonites led by Pastor Bernie Retzlaff and his wife Anne. After watching the horrifying images of Indo-Chinese refugees fleeing political turmoil and stranded at sea, they decided to heed their religious calling and help. The group met the Ha family at the airport, rented and furnished a basement near the Retzlaff's house, and helped them find their first jobs. Twenty-five years later, the Has now live in a custom-built home at the edge of town while the Retzlaffs still live in their modest bungalow. Through years of hard work and determination, the Has have established themselves in their new community. Dr. Ha became a prominent anesthesiologist and one of his sons trained in the same profession. Mrs. Ha was finishing her exams to become a pharmacist. The sponsors and the sponsored have become friends, celebrating the Has' arrival each year. But the roles shifted over the years. When the daughter of the Retzlaffs cut off the tips of two fingers in an industrial accident, it was Dr. Ha who stabilized her in the emergency room. Then, when a relative of one of the sponsors went into surgery, the anesthetist was the junior Dr. Ha. Mrs. Retzlaff remarked: "This is how the tables turn, and how they have helped us. It is really remarkable. They live in a much better part of town than we do. We still live in our same old house. They have ambition and drive. It's really ironic, isn't it? If we ever need help, we know we can turn to them."

Analysis

Given the destitute situation in which many refugees find themselves, it is reasonable to expect that hosts or sponsors might take a more volunteering role. Although it took place in a different province at a different time, the case of the Has and Retzlaffs resembled that of the volunteer-work model in Jumelage. At the beginning, the sponsors probably had little knowledge of the culture of the sponsored individuals. The short-term outcomes of the relationship were asymmetrical with a clear direction of give and take. Yet, the long-term outcomes show that the benefits flow in both directions. The sponsoring experience has also changed the sponsors' impressions of newcomers. As Mrs. Retzlaff said: "In the beginning, it was really exciting to be able to help these people. They became independent so quickly and we went on to form a friendship. We are so fortunate."

Challenges and Possible Options

Measuring the impact of Host is easier said than done. The LINC program could be assessed using the number of students reaching a prescribed level of competency. Presumably, newcomers can communicate better in one of the official languages. Clients of ISAP can evaluate the usefulness of the services received, or the competency of the service providers. For example, one may look at the appropriateness of the referrals or the accuracy of information provided. With cross-cultural understanding being a primary objective, the impact of Host is a challenging and complex undertaking. For example, how can we measure friendship in the short term? In the long term, how can we demonstrate the causal link between social and economic participation and the network developed through Host? Only an experimental study, comparing newcomers who participated in Host with those who did not, could show the direct impact of Host. Such an undertaking, however, is not feasible and too costly.

In the absence of experimental studies, a before and after survey could be an alternative measure of the short-term impact of Host. For example, applicants could be asked to fill out a survey at the time of application. The survey could contain a few questions about current networks of hosts and newcomers. It could be as simple as the percentage of friends or acquaintances of the same ethnic group as the applicant, and the percentage of friends or acquaintances of a different ethnic group. At the conclusion of the program, a similar questionnaire could be administered. In addition to the network question, hosts could be asked to assess if the experience has positively or negatively changed their perception of immigrants. To the extent possible, a follow-up survey could be conducted among these participants two years after the program. By doing this, it may be possible to see how the relationship and the networks of volunteers and newcomers have evolved.

Conclusion

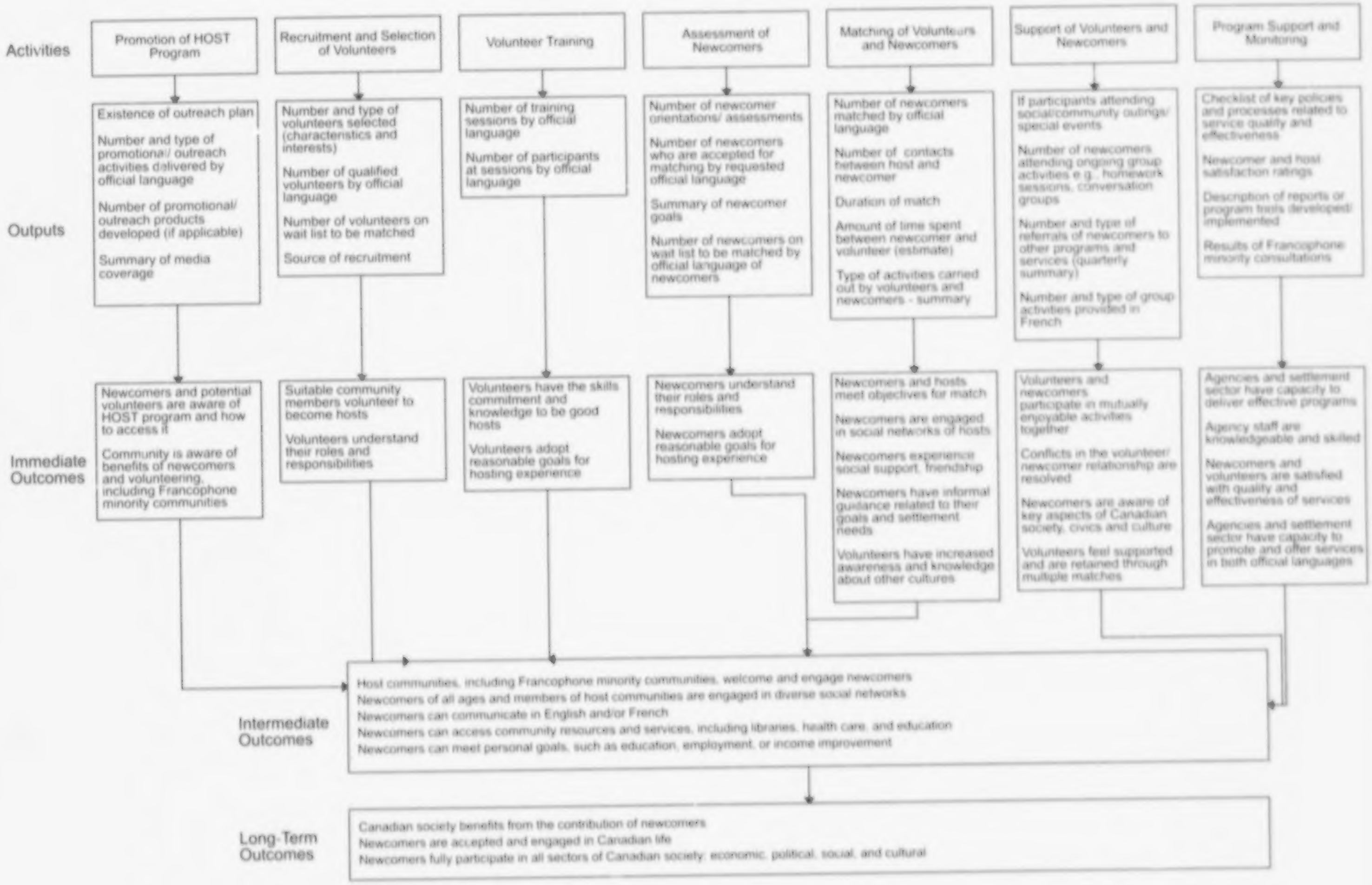
Does social capital, defined as social networks, play a role in immigrant integration? The answer is a resounding yes. Does social capital lead to better settlement and integration outcomes for immigrants and for society in general? The answer is a qualified yes. So far, studies only demonstrate the relationship between networks and getting a job. They do not show whether networks result in better jobs. Policy makers need to be mindful of other factors influencing social capital formation especially social class, gender, race, and ethnicity.

Can settlement programs facilitate the social and economic integration of newcomers through the formation of a social network between newcomers and their receiving communities? The answer is a cautious maybe. By funding a suite of settlement programs, CIC has provided the infrastructure of settlement support. Events, such as the Settlement Conference, via the Voluntary Sector Initiative, help build a culture of sharing and networking among settlement workers and between service organizations and government departments. Without funding from CIC and other orders of government, programs, such as Host, would be difficult to maintain.

That said, we must remember that people immigrate to Canada primarily for economic and educational reasons. The immediate needs of newcomers remain language, employment, housing, and access to other social services. Understandably, programs that require the bulk of government funding are LINC and ISAP. Language and access to employment remain top priorities in settlement and integration. Key factors to labour market success for immigrants remain language, employer awareness, familiarity with the Canadian work environment, and the effective assessment of foreign credentials and experience. As Li (2004: 185) rightly argued, "despite its value to those immigrants and ethnic members who lack much human capital or financial capital, social capital cannot replace other forms of capital to produce economic opportunities and outcomes beyond the confines of material resources."

We should not underestimate the impact of Host. Being able to function and participate in any society requires an understanding of the rules and norms, both written and unwritten, that direct people's behaviour. Cultural reciprocity, or the process of exchanging cultural cues and knowledge equally between hosts and newcomers, provides an additional important component of the foundation for integration. These cannot be learned in classrooms or from textbooks. Rather, they are acquired through informal communications. Host enables newcomers and volunteers to develop networks outside their own ethnic communities. In the long run, this is essential for the cohesion of our society. Yet we need to keep in mind that immigrants are not here primarily to establish social networks. Social capital is a means to an end, not the end itself.

APPENDIX 1: HOST LOGIC MODEL


Activities
Outputs
Immediate Outcomes
Intermediate Outcomes
Long-Term Outcomes
Promotion of HOST Program
Recruitment and Selection of Volunteers
Volunteer Training
Assessment of Newcomers
Matching of Volunteurs and Newcomers
Support of Volunteers and Newcomers
Program Support and Monitoring
Existence of outreach plan
Number and type of promotional/ outreach activities delivered by official language
Number of promotional/ outreach products developed (if applicable)
Summary of media coverage
Number and type of volunteers selected (characteristics and interests)
Number of qualified volunteers by official language
Number of volunteers on wait list to be matched
Source of recruitment
Number of training sessions by official language
Number of participants at sessions by official language
Number of newcomer orientations/ assessments
Number of newcomers who are accepted for matching by requested official language
Summary of newcomer goals
Number of newcomers on wait list to be matched by official language of newcomers
Number of newcomers matched by official language
Number of contacts between host and newcomer
Duration of match
Amount of time spent between newcomer and volunteer (estimate)
Type of activities carried out by volunteers and newcomers - summary
If participants attending social/community outings/ special events
Number of newcomers attending ongoing group activities e.g., homework sessions, conversation groups
Number and type of referrals of newcomers to other programs and services (quarterly summary)
Number and type of group activities provided in French
Checklist of key policies and processes related to service quality and effectiveness
Newcomer and host satisfaction ratings
Description of reports or program tools developed/ implemented
Results of Francophone minority consultations
Newcomers and potential volunteers are aware of HOST program and how to access it
Community is aware of benefits of newcomers and volunteering, including Francophone minority communities
Suitable community members volunteer to become hosts
Volunteers understand their roles and responsibilities
Volunteers have the skills commitment and knowledge to be good hosts
Volunteers adopt reasonable goals for hosting experience
Newcomers understand their roles and responsibilities
Newcomers adopt reasonable goals for hosting experience
Newcomers and hosts meet objectives for match
Newcomers are engaged in social networks of hosts
Newcomers experience social support, friendship
Newcomers have informal guidance related to their goals and settlement needs
Volunteers have increased awareness and knowledge about other cultures
Volunteers and newcomers participate in mutually enjoyable activities together
Conflicts in the volunteer/ newcomer relationship are resolved
Newcomers are aware of key aspects of Canadian society, civics and culture
Volunteers feel supported and are retained through multiple matches
Agencies and settlement sector have capacity to deliver effective programs
Agency staff are knowledgeable and skilled
Newcomers and volunteers are satisfied with quality and effectiveness of services
Agencies and settlement sector have capacity to promote and offer services in both official languages
Host communities, including Francophone minority communities, welcome and engage newcomers
Newcomers of all ages and members of host communities are engaged in diverse social networks
Newcomers can communicate in English and/or French
Newcomers can access community resources and services, including libraries, health care, and education
Newcomers can meet personal goals, such as education, employment, or income improvement
Canadian society benefits from the contribution of newcomers
Newcomers are accepted and engaged in Canadian life
Newcomers fully participate in all sectors of Canadian society: economic, political, social, and cultural

Source: Kerr (2004).

Notes

1 The author thanks for their comments and suggestions, from the Policy Research Initiative, Lori Brooks, Catherine Demers, Sandra Franke, and from Citizenship and Immigration Canada, Colleen Calvert, Martha Justus, Elizabeth Ruddick, and Jean Séguin. The views expressed here are those of the author and do not reflect the opinions of the Policy Research Initiative or Citizenship and Immigration Canada.

2 The term "immigrants" refers to individuals who are foreign-born. In most research, the term "newcomers" refers to recent immigrants who have been in Canada for a short time (e.g., five years or less).

3 In the Canadian Language Benchmarks, communicative proficiency in English as a second language is expressed in benchmarks or reference points. <www.language.ca/bench.html>. Accessed March 4, 2005.

4 Most of the material used here came from a paper by Citizenship and Immigration Canada titled, "Social Capital Formation in Practice: Examples from the Settlement Community in Canada".

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Commentary on "Orienting Newcomers to Canadian Society: Social Capital and Settlement"

Rosaline Frith, Citizenship and Immigration Canada

Both bonding and bridging capital are important components to an immigrant's integration cycle. However, all too often, the Canadian public views bonding from a negative perspective. The criticism is that immigrants create safe havens where there is little need to learn one of Canada's official languages and where there is little need to integrate into the general population. I would argue that statistics will show that immigrants need to bond in the initial stages of settlement in order to gain confidence and be prepared to take the risk of social bridging. Bonding and bridging are time sensitive and both require intervention. Government has a role to play in sharing accurate information on social bonding and in promoting social bridging. However, without accurate measures of the impacts of bonding, it is very difficult to seek funding to support information sharing or programs to support bridging. It is through studies and conferences, such as the one organized by the PRI, that policy makers and academics can arrive at a better understanding of the nature of social capital and devise tools to measure more accurately its impact. The paper, "Orienting Newcomers to Canadian Society: Social Capital and Settlement," points out many of the positive outcomes of bringing established immigrants, Canadians, and newcomers together. It is a first step toward a more formal evaluation that would better support future government policy.

IMPACTS OF SOCIAL CAPITAL ON EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT IN ABORIGINAL COMMUNITIES: LESSONS FROM AUSTRALIA, CANADA, AND NEW ZEALAND

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Introduction

Social capital has received much attention and been the subject of great debate in the social sciences and policy arenas in recent years. But, does social capital have the capacity and utility to produce meaningful change, in achieving the goals of society?

This paper examines the impacts of social capital on Aboriginal educational attainment in Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. The aim is to explore how social capital theory has been applied to Aboriginal contexts in each country, and determine if social capital plays or can play any role in improving educational attainment for Aboriginal populations. Does social capital figure in the formation of programs and policies? Should it be a consideration? In what contexts does social capital have an effect on educational attainment? We approached these questions by creating as extensive an inventory of policies and programs as possible for each country. We supplemented our inventory with e-mail, phone, and face-to-face interviews with experts, Canadian Aboriginal students, and government policy officers in all three countries. We thank everyone who took time to work with us.

We looked for patterns and distilled the role of social capital. Our research looked at conscious applications of the concept but also where we could discern its implicit part in educational attainment.

Why Aboriginal Education?

The focus on educational attainment and human capital development is strategic. Much research has illustrated the gap in the standard of living between the greater Canadian society and Aboriginal people (Beavon and Cooke, 2003), and the foundations for understanding these outcomes (White et al., 2003, 2004). A recurring theme is the lagging levels of educational attainment and poor labour market outcomes among Aboriginal people compared to the non-Aboriginal population. The 2001 Census demonstrates the gaps clearly. Among the population 15 years and over 48.0 percent of Aboriginal people have less than a high school graduation certificate compared to 30.8 percent of the non-Aboriginal population. The percentage of Aboriginal people with high school and some post-secondary education is 22.4 percent compared to 25.0 percent for the non-Aboriginal population. For trades or college, 23.7 percent of Aboriginal people possess this credential compared to 25.9 percent of the non-Aboriginal population. Only 4.4 percent of Aboriginal people have achieved a university credential compared to 15.7 percent of the non-Aboriginal population (Statistics Canada, 2003).

Researchers and government alike have recognized the import of education in policy aimed at improving Aboriginal outcomes. As noted in the Royal Commission on Aboriginal People (RCAP) report, there are significant problems related to the low educational attainment of First Nations students (King, 1993). For example, under Grade 9 in 1995-1996 the age appropriate rate for students in provincial schools was 92.8 percent and 86.0 percent for band schools. Post Grade 9, the age appropriate rate dropped to 62.0 percent for provincial schools and 43.8 percent for band schools. In terms of school leaver rates, data from 2000-2001 that examined registered and non-registered Indian and Inuit students who live on reserve in Canada showed that 30 percent of school leavers withdrew from school and only 13.2 percent graduated (White et al., 2004). Further, post-secondary take up and completion rates are of great significance. Indeed, attention to issues at this point in the educational system is critical as the accumulation of human capital at post-secondary institutions is an especially important ingredient for individual and community success. The most highly educated are the most valuable in terms of their capacity to contribute to society. In 2000-2001, graduates of secondary school comprised only 13.2 percent of school leavers; of that number, 48 percent pursued post-secondary education. In terms of issues related to completion rates, Hull's (2004) work showed that the gap between Aboriginal groups and other Canadians is largest at the university level.

The picture is not totally bleak. For example, data show there have been some improvements in educational attainment over time. In 1991, the high school completion rate on reserves was 31.4 percent. This figure increased to 41.4 percent in 2001, an increase of 10 percent. In comparison, the general population high school completion rate increased 6.9 percent over this period from 61.8 percent to 68.7 percent. Although the First Nation on-reserve high school completion rate is well below the Canadian rate, it is good news that the First Nation rate has been increasing over time and is actually growing at a very fast rate relative to the general population (INAC, 2004).

In 2000, the Auditor General of Canada (2000) issued a report outlining her view of the positive and negative dimensions of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) programming. She noted that studies conducted between 1991 and 2000 indicated deficiencies in the management structures for education, insufficient attention toward retention of traditional languages, curriculum shortfalls, a shortage of funds for special education, library, and counselling services, and the need for improved teacher training. When that report was issued, INAC had already begun, to respond to these problems. However, as with the other countries studied, progress is very slow as the problems are resistant to interventions.

In 2002, the Canadian government launched a review to identify the factors underlying quality First Nations education. The Minister's National Working Group on Education made several recommendations including (but not restricted to) the following.

- Include language, culture, and indigenous knowledge systems in all funded educational programs.
- Provide resources for the development of parental, family, and community capacity building that incorporates indigenous understanding.
- Make schools and educational institutions parent and elder friendly places to promote the development of school partnerships with family and community.
- Initiate community-based strategies for early childhood development.
- Substantially increase the number of Aboriginal secondary school teachers trained and placed while extending and developing teacher education programs that make existing teachers more aware and sensitive of Aboriginal children's needs and capacities (INAC, 2002).

Because of the tight time frame, we decided to look at only some key initiatives related to enhancing educational outcomes using the social capital lens. Interestingly, the trends we documented are not exclusive to Aboriginal people. Indeed, Aboriginal populations across all three countries have less attainment than the general population, and this issue has not gone unnoticed by governments.

Defining Social Capital

At the conceptual and theoretical levels, social capital has various faces and dispositions. Efforts to arrive at a single conceptualization and definition of social capital have met with much resistance. To avoid this problem, we tried to match our working understanding with the proposed definition set out by some members of the Policy Research Initiative in documents that launched this initiative on social capital. We leave the theoretical debates regarding the "correct" definition of social capital for another forum.

Given the research question, "what is the utility of social capital in fostering higher educational attainment for Aboriginal people," we adopted a structural approach to the concept, which emphasizes social networks as the focal point of investigation. Social capital can be defined as the networks of social relations within the milieu, characterized by specific norms and attitudes that *potentially* enable individuals or groups to access a pool of resources and supports. As is common practice, we conceptualized social capital in three different forms: bonding social capital (intragroup relations), bridging social capital (horizontal intergroup relations), and linking social capital (vertical intergroup relations in a society stratified by class, status, and power relations) (Woolcock, 2001).

Part I: Four Elements Affect the Efficacy of Social Capital

Social capital functions as an independent variable that explains some variance in population and individual outcomes. However, understanding what seems to impact on the effectiveness of social capital provides interesting insights into the potential strengths and weaknesses of social capital in general.

Four elements interact to influence the policy-program effects of social capital.

1. Levels of Social Capital

Social capital seems to have more influence at set threshold points. For example, in the case of Port Harrison in Canada, the movement of the community to a new location led to the destruction of social capital as it broke the ties between elders and the young. Parents and elders used to teach the young how to hunt and build ice houses. The relocation to a place where there were no hunting possibilities led to a break-up of the traditional system where young people travelled with the elder hunters, learning many skills, such as language and traditions, during the hunting season. Before the move, this community had high levels of educational attainment, because in the off-season the community studied at the school. After the relocation, this community spiralled downward as evidenced by many social indicators: suicide increased, school non-attendance became endemic, fertility rates declined, and rates of illness rose (White and Maxim, 2003). The state had destroyed, perhaps inadvertently, the social capital of the community.

As social capital approaches zero, there seems to be a great effect on population outcomes. In communities decimated of social capital networks, educational attainment is very low. The rebuilding of social capital in these communities can have a positive effect.

However, given the threshold effect, as we build social capital to even moderate levels, the effect may be negligible or, depending on the existence of the following three other elements, we may see declines in positive outcomes as social capital grows very strong.

2. Norm Effects

Increasing levels of social capital are not necessarily related with increasing educational attainment. This can be understood by examining norm effects. Simply put, where parents and family have low educational attainment and high levels of bonding social capital, the child's educational attainment is likely to be low. This is why we see a high correlation between mother's educational attainment and their children's educational attainment (White et al., 2004). The post-secondary students we interviewed all came from communities where their family-clan networks had relatively high educational attainment. These communities also have higher educational attainment than average. Ward's (1992) work examining the Cheyenne found that the level of educational attainment in the clan group is critical to the educational success of the children. In another US examination of policy, Ward (1998: 102) noted that in the more successful community, Busby and its tribal school, "adults with education are the role models and sources of support for students." This is a case where the norms available for the child are critical, and substituting higher-norm adults for the bonded network of the family has positive effects.

Where we have low educational norms embedded in a child's family, it is counter-productive to build bonding social capital. The higher the bonding social capital, the more the low norms are reinforced and the lower the educational attainment is likely to be. In Part II, we have several indications of this process. In Australia, they had truancy problems and developed a program whereby buses went to the homes of every Aboriginal student to get them in the morning. They discovered that the parents, who had little schooling, would not wake the children to get on the bus – they preferred to have them sleep.

We find examples in all the target countries.

3. Building Relationships Based on Cultural Context

Where bonding social capital networks are integrated into wider society (either bridged or linked), there is greater potential for increasing educational attainment. Even remote communities can experience more improvement if culturally open. Open cultures can exist in a few ways: where language use includes dominant languages, people engage in the wider economy, and traditions are not exclusionary. Openness is a relative concept; hence, if that which is "outside" can be made more like the target group's culture, it stimulates a more open situation and allows bridging and linking. Highly closed dominant cultures and marginalized or non-integrated ethnic groups can have high levels of social capital and very low educational attainment. Integrated and open cultural contexts that have much lower social capital will have more potential for educational attainment.

This can be understood in different ways. For example, by looking at the more successful endeavours in our target countries, we can understand the process as one where the dominant cultural group gathers a clear appreciation of the Aboriginal culture. This appreciation is translated into behaviours consistent with the norms within the Aboriginal culture which facilitates the development of relations and allows linking and bridging to take place. In New Zealand, we find this process most clearly manifested. Williams and Robinson (2002: 12) sought to identify indigenous applications of social capital. They argued that "the nature of social capital in New Zealand can only be understood by taking into account elements of social capital important to the Maori," which led to their development of a Maori concept of social capital. Robinson and Williams (2001) argued that there were nine key factors or emphases in a Maori concept of social capital. Our review of their work indicates that the key differences involve the role of the primary network. For example, in their estimation, social capital is not produced outside of family. The extended family in Maori thinking is the community. Imposition of networks outside the family or community are deemed to be less functional. Robinson and Williams (2001: 55-60) outlined their theory.

> A Maori concept of social capital emphasises the following elements.
>
> Extended family relationships are the basis for all other relationships. The *whanau* [family] is the nucleus of all things. Maori community values and norms come from traditional values that are rooted in the *whanau*.... It is essential to have knowledge of, and to know one's place in...the hierarchy of *whanau*, *hapu* [sub-clan] and *iwi* [tribe].... Relationships in Maori society develop around informal association rather than formal organisations.... The connectedness that is derived from this association.... The holistic, integrating nature of relationships and networks are of primary importance, while their use or functional activity is secondary.... Family, tribal and community networks may take priority over functional contracts with specified agencies such as health, education or welfare....
>
> Membership in customary Maori associations is based on an exchange of obligations and acceptance by the group. Conditions for joining are verbal, implicit and obligation-driven – rather than rule-driven, specified and written down.... The concept...includes obligations based on a common ancestry and the cultural dimension that obliges one to act in certain ways that give rise to the development of social capital. Key concepts of Maori society that relate to social capital include *hapai* (the requirement to apply the concept of uplifting/enhancement) and *tautoko* (providing support within the community).

So New Zealand views of social capital imply that relationships must be built through informal associations as opposed to formal institutionalized structures, and the informal relations that lead to the connectedness and networks that are created have specific functions and expectations at the family kin group (*whanau*), sub-clan (*hapu*), and tribal (*iwi*) level. According to Williams and Robinson (2002), they take precedence over formalized contractual relations in things such as education. The traditional culture has two social capital related processes that New Zealand policy can utilize: *hapai* (bridge or connect), which we see in the form of drawing the family into preschool; and *tautoko* (support or commitment), which we see in the form of using school activities to raise attainment. An example of this is the Tu Tangata program where community volunteers work with the schools to help improve student behaviour and achievement.

From a practical point of view, the problem is how to use the strong bonding capital networks within the community at the family and clan level to enhance population outcomes. The simple approach to this would have included bridging and linking them to wider social capital networks. Robinson (2004) noted that success depends on two factors: creating or drawing on a collective historical memory of relations held by the *iwi* (tribe) with another community that facilitates the bridging process (i.e., the memory and history of relations with the central government in this case); and the perception of shared or lack of shared understandings. These are assessed and developed through interaction. Interaction takes place in traditional forums such as the *hui* – a ceremonial gathering that allows people to get to know each other in a recognizable context. It seems that this recognition can manufacture a collective knowledge/memory of shared understandings, which permits linkages.

New Zealand has developed a Maori concept of social capital where it is only produced in the extended family (*whanau*) and cannot be created for the Maori from the outside through linking or bridging networks. Thus, programs that involve the imposition of networks outside the family or community are deemed to lack functionality. Success rests on bridging networks based on relationships that must be built through engagement in informal associations at the *whanau*, *hapu*, or *iwi* level. Informal associations that work can eventually be translated to more formal institutionalized structures.

The Maori have specific practices where *whanau*, *hapu*, and *iwi* levels develop understandings of each other. These specialized meeting and exchange structures, such as the *hui*, are used to create higher level linkages and bridges between social capital networks.[1]

In New Zealand, government policy and program development was preceded by an understanding of Maori culture. The implementation of the programs to help with educational attainment issues could only be done by creating the conditions for bridging and linking, which meant opening the cultural context by adopting the Maori ways. There are many examples across the world where Aboriginal cultures have changed and become more open. Exogamy creates more openness for example. In Australia and Canada the residential schools were an attempt to force assimilation – a very destructive way of attempting to create linkages.

4. Community Capacity

Strong bonding social capital networks with high attainment members that are bridged to school networks and linked to resources seem to have a positive effect on the transitions to high school and post-secondary institutions, graduate rates, and overall educational success. The context within which social capital works seems much more important than the "strength" or "level" of the bonded network. Networks cannot hold all the resources necessary to ensure educational attainment. They must operate in capital-rich environments; that is, they require other forms of capital in order to have a positive influence on educational attainment. This is why communities with low economic development (high unemployment) have low educational attainment. Those willing or able to integrate with wider capital formations (e.g., physical capital) or with the capacity to develop such capital based on their infrastructures tend to have high educational attainment.

Australia demonstrated this dimension very clearly. Stone et al. (2003) argued that using social capital generated by low capacity communities can reinforce low capacity. They looked at this in the context of job searching, but it has implications for education. If we intervene to network low achievement parents with the schools, we may very well encourage a reproduction of the lower achievement according to the Australian approach.

McGinty (2002) made the case bluntly arguing that vesting Aboriginal people with decision-making power in the absence of appropriate knowledge, skills, and capacity to make well-informed decisions does not produce advantageous outcomes.

Hunter (2000) noted that unemployment of adults is a key problem in creating and sustaining poor educational results for children. Community capacity is once again seen as playing a fundamental role in educational processes. His study of social capital concluded that reinforcing social capital in a community with low employment levels reinforces lower norms of achievement and leads to children uninterested in educational attainment.

In a study by the Center for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research, Hunter (2000), however, did call for Australia to vet all policies to determine the effects on social capital, and how to ensure that policies increase the involvement and connection of Aboriginal society with wider Australian society. This "connectiveness" may actually increase integration and mitigate the effects of high levels of bonding capital, which works with low education norms to reinforce separateness. Hunter (2004) noted that the exclusion of outsiders prevents access to services especially in the area of education; excessive claims on group members play out as demand sharing that may undermine educational involvement by youth; restrictions on group members' freedom can undermine autonomy where norms dictate non-involvement; and downward levelling of norms creates a non-achievement context.

The Australians are developing a theoretical model that differs from New Zealand and advocates the need to intervene to build community capacity, including at the level of network construction. They have also placed cultural specificity at the core of approaching the issue of social capital and educational attainment, but it appears somewhat differently (more interventionist) in practice.

Conceptual Modelling of the Four Elements

Scenario 1: Aboriginal children with moderate to high social capital where educational attainment norms in their networks are moderate to high and there is cultural openness and low unemployment levels in the community will have high educational attainment.

Scenario 2: When Aboriginal students have high levels of social capital with low educational attainment norms in their network and low economic development, they will have low educational attainment. This scenario is often compounded by being resilient to outside network bridging and linking – a result of being culturally closed.

Scenario 3: Aboriginal children with zero or extremely low social capital will have no educational attainment norms to draw upon and will have low educational attainment. In this case alone, building social capital is a key prerequisite to increasing educational attainment.

Part II: Selected Policy and Program Examples

This is not an exhaustive review of the activities in New Zealand, Australia and Canada; instead, it examines key illustrations of the four-dimension model.

New Zealand

New Zealand has targeted educational attainment for the Maori as the key to reversing the negative population indicators all too common among indigenous populations worldwide. New Zealand reports small yet positive improvements based on two identified factors that have made the biggest difference in engaging students and raising their achievement: the quality of teaching and the relationship between *whanau*/home and school (NZ Ministry of Education, 2003a).

There has been awareness training to raise teacher expectations of Maori learners, aggressive recruitment of Maori teachers, and specialized professional training on how to work with Maori learners. At the early childhood level, there has been the co-operative development of a national curriculum, at the compulsory levels (primary and secondary) the creation of a new curriculum written in Maori and English, and the development of an educational review office to evaluate and report on student achievement (NZ Ministry of Maori Development, 1993, 1996, 1997a,b). We concentrate on the second issue, the relationship between family and school, because this is most clearly connected to the use of social capital to increase educational outcomes. It also provides the clearest indication of what we have referred to as opening relationships based on cultural context.

Since 1988, the New Zealand government has moved to "hand over responsibility for governing educational institutions to the local community and make communities accountable ... reforms have encouraged more innovative ways for communities and education institutions to work together" (NZ Ministry of Maori Development, 1997b: 10). The evaluation of the reforms, overall, cited that the successful initiatives occurred when there was community-school co-operation and when the community families either proposed, developed, or participated and supported the programs.

One of the first policies developed and translated into programs was the stepwise creation of pathways for parents to be involved in supporting their children's learning. The Parent Support and Development Program (PSDP), Study Support Centres (SSC), and Parents as Mentors (PAM) initiatives were set up as partnerships between schools, *whanau*, and communities. If social capital is created in the kin group, and social capital in the form of networks of support are key to improving school achievement, then building network connections between schools and *whanau* would be the way to proceed. This is exactly what they have done. The building block of their improvement program is increasing Maori involvement, but that can only be done bottom up (recall the discussion in Part I).

In the example, there was an assessment that Maori children come less prepared for elementary school, which leads to performance and discipline issues. This led to a widespread discussion with the *whanau* and communities about establishing and running preschools in those communities to increase the preparedness of the children. To get the *whanau* involved, the Ministry set up stalls at community events and attended *hui* (special meeting with dialogue). The Ministry networks became known to the Maori. Recall that relationships in Maori society develop around informal association rather than formal organizations, and so family, tribal, and community networks may take priority over functional contracts with specified agencies. Thus, building the personal informal links was a precursor to more formalized relations. After becoming known to Maori families, the Ministry explained the benefits of preschool and helped parents set up their own early childhood programs or helped children enroll

Te Kohanga Reo (TKR)

The TKR is a total immersion Te Reo Maori *whanau* program for children five years and under. The early childhood education is managed by the *whanau* within agreed guidelines set down by the Te Kohanga Reo National Trust. The Trust is a formalized and institutionalized network built from the ground level up through a culturally acceptable process of engagement. By 1996, there were 767 centres with 15,000 children and over 31,000 by 2003. This is clearly a successful initiative that used social capital networks at the *whanau* level to build success.

Sources: NZ Ministry of Maori Development (1997a) and NZ Ministry of Education (2003a).

in the founding ones. Programs such as Parents as First Teachers (PFT) focused on providing support and guidance to parents with children up to three years of age. In 2003, 3,000 Maori families were involved in the PFT program (Farquhar, 2003; NZ Ministry of Education, 2003a).

At the primary school level, programs aimed at developing the relationship between *whanau*/home and school included increasing the parental resources that flow to the child, by moderating the relationship between school and *whanau*. One key program, the Study Support Centres (SSC), offered parents the opportunity to get involved in primary education. The SSC are after-school enterprises that aim to develop good study habits (NZ Ministry of Education, 2003a). The Parent Mentoring Program had teachers and parents providing mentorships to new students to integrate them in the centres. It has just been started and is in the more remote areas. At this point, about 460 families use the service. All these initiatives use the concepts of *hapai* and *tautoko* (support for uplifting the community and building community support.)

Parents can pursue the position of school trustee, which provides them with an opportunity for involvement managing the teaching and learning of the students. Trustees get training and are connected to wider networks of principals and administrators (linking social capital), and so their skill sets can grow (NZ Ministry of Education, 2003a,c). Besides assisting in the management of the school, these skill sets also increase the capacity of the communities. The recruitment into the position of school trustee bridges the school and wider multiple school networks with the *whanau* or family networks; in turn, these are linked with the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Maori Development networks, which creates pathways for the movement of information and resources.

New Zealand has identified numeracy and literacy as two key factors holding back achievement of students. In accordance with the approach, which dictates that the establishment of ties must begin with family networks, two important developments have materialized: The Home School Partnership Initiative (HSPI) and School Iwi Liaison Program (SILP).

Government has used different methods to make the connections between its networks and Maori networks. We noted that the early childhood initiative depended on attending local fairs, meetings, cultural events, and *hui*. Another method is the establishment of Maori super educational officers *pouwhakataki*. These individuals are community education liaison officers with extensive community ties and educational backgrounds. Their job according to the government is "to act as a bridge between the educational sector and local community breaking down the barriers between schools and the *whanau*" (NZ Ministry of Education, 2003b). These revered people act as liaisons to the families, clans, and tribes on educational initiatives. In a social capital sense, they are live connections between networks. They facilitate the process of becoming known and hasten the movement to more formalized relationships.

What makes *pouwhakataki* an invaluable tool is their knowledge of Tikanga Maori, which allows them to broker relationships in the community; moreover, their extensive knowledge enables them to educate on Maori culture (NZ Ministry of Education, 2003b).

These examples illustrate the need to build culturally sensitive pathways that open the bonding social capital networks up to linking and bridging resource rich networks. The examples also illustrate the role of norms and the relative unimportance of levels of social capital in the basic bonding networks.

Australia

While the Australians have launched a myriad of programs to improve teacher cultural understanding, train new teachers, develop preschools and integrate parents, they see building community capacity as integral to making education relevant to indigenous peoples. Thus, jobs and access to markets are the foundation of success. They also see that the skills of the labour force have to increase to take advantage of any development. There is little evidence that the Australians are looking at any particular strategies that involve utilizing or developing social capital in this process. Some exceptions are, however, notable. The Gumala Mirnuwarni (Coming Together to Learn) Program, West Australia, was established in 1997. The House of Representatives Standing Committee (2004: 189) reported that impetus for this program was from the community's desire to see their children more actively participate in school: "It has involved collaboration and partnership between children, parents, schools, State and Commonwealth education authorities, three resource partners and a philanthropic organization, in a program designed to improve educational outcomes for local Indigenous students." A representative of Rio Tinto outlined one element of the project: it is a personal commitment contract which reads:

> I, the child, agree to go along to school and I, the family member, agree to support my child going to school .... If the child does not participate in school, then they are not welcome at the after-school program ... that has been set up for them. So there is an expectation that their participation in school will lead to enhanced benefits" (House of Representatives Standing Committee, 2004: 189).[2]

The Gumala Mirnuwarni has been successful, because of the attempts to link family networks, students, and school networks together using reciprocity mechanisms. The government recognizes the success of the Gumala Mirnuwarni project and has used it as a foundation for other initiatives. It has developed the notion of compacts around the country in which diverse stakeholders forge beneficial working relations, for example, families with schools and industry (House of Representatives Standing Committee, 2004). This increases the apparent benefits of school. The use of networks in the community is less developed and less widespread than New Zealand; however, an analysis of policy development does show the employment of networks. The Australians are cautious on social capital issues.

The Australian experience indicates the relationships between the goals of being educated and the motivation to be involved in the process of being educated. Where there is development in the community (higher capacity), there is a tangible reward or return for the work of going to school. Where there are no opportunities for work or societal involvement, the rewards are unclear and involvement in the educational process diminishes.

We found interesting examples of this in our studies of the US situation (see Ward, 1998) where community capacity was closely correlated with educational success in a study of the Northern Cheyenne. Our own work has also shed light on this phenomenon (White and Maxim, 2002). Employment on reserve is highly correlated with better educational achievement and two-parent families. Two-parent families in communities with higher employment rates are more likely to have higher achieving children. Another key issue is parental/extended family and community adult characteristics. Where the people in the network who are involved with the school have high educational attainment, they have a much more positive effect.

Canada

National Policies in Canada

Indian and Northern Affairs Canada operates two major sets of programs.[3] The Elementary/Secondary Education National Program aims to "provide eligible students living on reserve with elementary and secondary education comparable to those that are required in provincial schools...where the reserve is located" (INAC, 2003a: 3). Funding is transferred to a variety of deliverers that can include the bands (communities) themselves, the provincial school boards if they are delivering the services, or federal schools maintained by the government. The Post Secondary Education Program's objective is to "improve the employability of First Nations people and Inuit by providing eligible students...access to education and skill development opportunities at the post secondary level" (INAC, 2003b: 3). This program aims to increase participation in post-secondary studies, post-secondary graduation rates, and employment rates among First Nation and Inuit students.

Canada launched a review in 2002 to identify and address the factors of a quality First Nations education. Even given these time frames, several initiatives have been started including literacy programs, Parental & Community Engagement pilots, the First Nations and Inuit Science and Technology Program. More time will have to elapse before we can evaluate these initiatives. However, many of these initiatives parallel those that have been successful in other countries. The key here will be to see how open the communities are to these initiatives and how the bridging activities work out in relation to improving educational success.

Provincial Initiatives

There are many policies and programs across the country affecting Aboriginal people that are aimed at enhancing their educational and labour market outcomes. We look at only a few illustrative examples using the social capital lens with a focus on British Columbia where the work that has been done is quite extensive.

The Cowichan Valley Aboriginal Education Improvement Agreement (Enhancement Agreement) is a five-year project running from May 2001 to June 2006. The numerous partners include the Ministry of Education, school boards and eight First Nations. Increasing the success rate of Aboriginal students in the public school system is paramount. The program sets out to narrow performance gaps

The Mi'kmaq Education Agreement: Bridging Networks for Information and Resource Transfer

A partnership of INAC, the Province of Nova Scotia and nine First Nations has led to an agreement where the Mi'kmaq have control over their own education system. This agreement provides these communities with the ability to pass laws for primary, elementary and secondary education on reserve for band members only. The Mi'kmaq under this agreement are obligated to provide equivalent education for primary, elementary and secondary education to non-members.

One stipulation of the Canadian government was the creation of an organization of all the Mi'kmaq nations into a type of governance structure that could be seen as similar to a school board.

> The creation of Mi'kmaw Kina'matnewey [MK] was much more than a federal stipulation. The organization was seen as a way to unify the voice of the Mi'kmaw communities in Nova Scotia, and a powerful tool for capacity building among the smaller communities. MK was needed to provide support and advice to those communities that needed it, and share resources and expertise across the province. (McCarthy, 2001:6-8).

While each community's chief holds a vote on MK's Board of Directors, the working groups give community "experts" the opportunity to come together and work out recurring problems and issues. Marion Paul, Director of Education for Eskasoni First Nation, notes: "It's almost a support group ... I bring a problem that I have in my schools, and there is always another community that has dealt with that already. The problems are often the same right across the board, and other people can always provide advice." (McCarthy 2001:7)

The MK provides an example of how bridging networks in the communities create the flow of resources and knowledge transfer that helps ensure a successful policy outcome.

Sources: Government of Canada (1998) and McCarthy (2001).

between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students with five target goal areas and to develop a school system that is supportive of Aboriginal histories, cultures, and languages (BC Ministry of Education, 2004; Cowichan Valley School District, 2004).[4]

The goal areas of the Agreement are diverse.

The first goal is to increase academic preparedness by developing early literacy projects in schools that have a large population of Aboriginal students (e.g., Early School Success and Communication for Success); hiring academic teacher assistants to assist in early intervention strategies; hiring teachers to lower class sizes; allocating Aboriginal support worker time for each school; and increasing grants to maintain these programs. The teacher assistants and Aboriginal support workers also assist in increasing the academic achievement of students, which is the second goal. The third goal seeks to increase the presence of Aboriginal culture, language, and history for all students. To achieve this outcome, Aboriginal support workers, who are familiar with the culture, language, and history of local Aboriginal people, are allocated time in each school. The fourth goal is to increase attendance through Aboriginal curriculum and instruction grants for schools. The fifth goal is to increase access to technologies, such as computers. All the initiatives require that grants be put in place to foster outcomes.

Social capital strategies play out here as the building of technology linkages binds the whole community to greater resource networks. The promotion of Aboriginal language, culture, and history strengthens the ties within the community, which builds bonding social capital. This process increases social participation and communication between students and the greater community, which increases the networks and resources available to students. In the case of allocating Aboriginal support worker time to each school, these workers have extensive formal training coupled with life experiences and cultural heritage as an Aboriginal person to help students achieve greater success in all school programs. The introduction of these workers to the network of students provides the latter with a new set of academically rich resources. These workers substitute or offset the low educational norm context of parental networks. The support workers are grounded in similar cultural norms and life experiences, which promotes higher levels of trust which could be positive in terms of opening the cultural context.

The 2002-2003 report indicated improvements across many measures: the highest number of Aboriginal graduates in 10 years, an increase in the number and percentage of Aboriginal students receiving a diploma, an increase in Aboriginal students meeting or exceeding expectations in Grade 4 numeracy, and grades 7 and 10 numeracy and writing tests, and an increase in average Aboriginal elementary school attendance.[5] Given the complexity of the Improvement Agreement and its infancy, there appears to be an effect from the enhancement of social capital.

We can see that there are elements of our four dimensions here. The Aboriginal support workers increase the educational norms of the students' immediate comparison group thereby substituting for the lower parental and family norms of attainment. This First Nation is more culturally open; indeed, the sensitivity to using First Nation culture in the curriculum and engaging First Nation members in the educational process enhances that openness context. Given the success, we would expect that there is enough social capital in the community (i.e., the threshold) and the community has a reasonable level of development. In previous work, we mapped the First Nations communities in Canada creating three categories of capacity level. Given the success they are having in their programs, we would expect these communities would not be in the lowest capacity category. Such is the case.

Best Practices

The Best Practices Project by the First Nation Schools Association and First Nations Education Steering Committee of British Columbia (1997) is a very successful initiative. There are many programs we could look at within this initiative but the role model program is a good illustration.

First Nations Role Model Program

In School District 52 (Prince Rupert), this program involves the use of very successful First Nations role models in the classroom. The goal is to promote awareness of First Nations cultures and issues for all students and teachers while promoting self-esteem and pride in cultural heritage. There is a benefit to the school and students as the mentor links the students to the resources of the outside world, and they substitute for the low educational norm context of the parental networks. Not only can the mentors' resources be potentially drawn upon, but they establish a relationship that is grounded in a culturally familiar context.

The provision of a higher norm model also substitutes for lower attainment levels in the child's bonding capital group (family) while fostering openness. The key here is not building bonding social capital.

Bonding and Bridging Social Capital to Enhance Educational Success: Anne MacLeod, Grade 6/7 Teacher, Nathan Barton Elementary School, Nisga'a School District #92

"I would like to begin by saying that our growth in the area of literacy required real effort from the School District, teachers, but also our parents and communities. We worked very hard to achieve success in literacy, including an evening program every Tuesday and Thursday with children 1 to 8 years of age. They came in for 1-½ hours to participate in the school environment so that they would feel comfortable there. The evening program included puppets, puzzles, and card games, with everyone involved in all of the activities.

This year, we began to include older children in our programs. We have been emphasizing their part as role models by having them work and read with the younger children. At the end of each event we have a book draw, and as a result children have begun to love books.

We also have a regular craft night to bring families into the school in a non-academic setting. That program has also been very successful. One great example was our pumpkin carving activity. Last year, we brought in 30 pumpkins for carving; this year we needed 60 and they were all carved by the end of the evening!

We have assemblies once a month; we do singing .... The Principal also started a tots gym for children ages 2 to 4. The kids come and play in the gym and they're taught skills at the same time.

The results of our efforts are that parents feel totally comfortable in the school. Academic and behaviour improvements are also being evidenced. Parents realize the importance of books, and at a recent book fair we had $1,600 in sales!

We know that our children can do what they set out to do, and parents now know that they can help their children to achieve success. That's what is making our programs work. Thank you for listening."

Source: First Nations Education Steering Committee and the British Columbia Ministry Education (2003:8).

The Summer Science and Technology Camps Initiative, funded by INAC and co-ordinated by the First Nations Education Steering Committee, targets First Nations youth to engage them in science and technology issues, and expose them to the numerous education and career opportunities available. The program includes local elders and other community members through the process of having First Nations communities and organizations develop the initiatives in accordance with their local priorities. Through partnerships with institutions outside of the community, such as BC Hydro, BC Gas, ministries of Fisheries and Forestry, Science World BC, and the University of British Columbia, the reason for education becomes clear. In a way this initiative connects students directly to the job market and makes education seem to have a purpose. In that respect, it plays the role that higher levels of community capacity and development would play. This is an illustration of what the Australians are arguing concerning the need for resource rich environments for social capital to operate.

As well, links are forged between the communities (children) and resource-rich institutions. The immediate effects are increased interest in science subjects, and the long-term establishment of relations between the community and the labour force.

Policy and Program Implications

Parts I and II drew some tentative linkages between the policy and program initiatives and the four elements that interact to enhance success generally and optimize social capital based initiatives particularly. We can draw more general conclusions. Policy and program success seems highly sensitive to context. In New Zealand where the Maori are a large proportion of the population, well developed programs build educational attainment levels. They are also based most closely on a home-grown, culturally specific notion of social capital. New Zealand has determined that social capital is only created in the communities at the family level. Given the families and sub-clans all have high bonding social capital levels and that the higher tribal organizations are built on this social capital base, any bridging or linking that is going to take place must be rooted in the core family networks. They have a restricted yet functional view of using social capital where the high levels of bonding social capital must be shaped and used in the wider institutions to promote the norms of external networks. The programs began at the preschool with the families running the preschool, which changed attitudes toward schooling. Parents became involved in preparing children for school, which was often done in the school setting, by passing school skills onto them. It is through this process that the school system becomes a part of the family. The school networks, including teachers and principals, became known and began to share a history with the Maori while developing knowledge of the customs and norms. This process allowed the *whanau* to be bridged and linked to the educational institutions, which precipitated the flow of the bridged and linked resources. Specialized Maori educators chosen from the communities acted as liaisons to marry family networks to the teachers and principals, who in turn were linked to ministry networks. The policy aimed at creating a context of cultural openness in this case. Openness can be created in two ways. First, one can transform aspects of the cultural norms of the target populations, although this is the most difficult and runs the risk of being seen as assimilationist. A second approach is to make sure the program is delivered in a manner that is non-challenging to the Aboriginal culture using the ways of the people to the greatest possible degree. This makes the institution, such as a school, more like the people and less "outside." A closed cultural context is one that has two approaches that are culturally distant. Narrowing the gap through the introduction of Aboriginal language, community elder participation, and using the forums that are acceptable (e.g., the *hui* in New Zealand) helps create a more open context.

Specific policies and programs across the three countries all reinforce the importance of this condition being fulfilled. Many have aspects of their programs tailored, albeit often unconsciously, to reinforce openness. This process is clearly seen in initiatives such as Teaching the Teachers Aboriginal culture as well as programs that integrate community cultural leaders and make use of family and elders.

The Australians have a greater focus on economic development as a necessary condition for improving educational attainment. They have not developed an Aboriginally specific view of social capital. Instead, they are generally more sceptical of the concept noting that the high levels of bonding social capital combined with poor norms around schooling reinforce non-attainment. Australia seeks a more stepwise process to improving educational attainment where the key is community development and improved community capacity. Having access to jobs enables communities and those citizens in them to see and understand the utility of education. Also, this strategy retains those with human capital in communities which, in turn, provides better norm models.

Using our framework, and incorporating the Australian experience, we might argue that in the unsuccessful programs, parents were not easily involved, because they had little understanding of the importance of schooling given their low educational attainment. Given the low community capacity in terms of economic development, the purpose for supporting the schools and promoting higher educational attainment for the children was unclear to both the community and the students. It is argued by the Australians that building community development would create the impetus for parental promotion of schooling. The more successful programs were linked to job paths.

Queensland, which had a problem with school attendance, developed a program to have buses drive to each student's house every morning to take them to school. The result was poor, because the parents would not wake the kids if they were sleeping. Attendance, leading to graduation, leading to jobs was the needed understanding. The successful programs developed partnerships with business creating job opportunities. These partnerships link industry and community interests giving meaning to educational attainment. They created the integration of the family bonding capital networks with the resources that made education more important. In these cases, the building of community capacity was key, and the other elements, while important, needed to be less prominent. Building social capital at the community level (bonding) was of little importance and may have been detrimental in the absence of economic development given the low educational norms.

In Canada, at the federal level, some recent initiatives parallel successful initiatives in other countries. Initiatives stemming from the Minister's task force and Auditor General's report have not had sufficient time to develop; it would be inappropriate to evaluate at this stage as we have no data from which to work.

The provinces have developed programs that address specific local needs. We can draw the conclusion that the provincial programs that are most successful target the specific problem associated with our four element model. For example, the Science and Technology Camps in British Columbia where the inclusion of local elders and other community members in the camps as teachers led to First Nations communities and organizations developing the initiatives in accordance with their cultures; consequently, family networks were bolstered by having adult participants that came back and encouraged support for education. Another fairly explicit example is the First Nations Role Model Program where mentors substituted for the low educational norm context of the parental networks. Other initiatives that we studied but did not report showed similar patterns. The First Nations Services program at the University of Western Ontario is more related to social capital. The students have chosen to come to school but will they succeed? The creation of counselling, comradeship, and mentoring relations is clearly indicative of the development of, and connection to, networks rich with social capital that substitute for family bonding capital that is absent.

In Alberta, we observed programs that targeted employment as an outcome for education. These programs were more successful than those that simply poured monetary resources into schools. Links to the labour market through the aforementioned programs increase bridging and linking social capital for the community. The trickle effect of school and community linkages to the parents and children provides the latter with a more encouraging and resourceful context in which to achieve academically. These programs can be seen to confront community capacity deficits and, thereby, promote educational attainment.

In conclusion, we would argue that understanding social capital is important in promoting educational attainment. However, it has a moderate influence and rarely acts alone. It influences outcomes for Aboriginal educational attainment in conjunction with other resources (human and economic/physical capital). It is contingent on the context and this can be assessed by using the four elements we have discussed throughout this paper.

- It is key to identify the specific context and interrelation of the four identified elements and address programming toward the specificity of the situation. Just building social capital would rarely be the most effective strategy. Where communities and family/clans face grave social problems, and there is extremely low bonding social capital, then it is appropriate to build that resource. However, under certain circumstances it could be the wrong strategy.
- Where there are very low educational norms in the child's networks, reinforcing social capital in those networks is the wrong approach. It will reinforce low norms and non-attainment strategies. Substituting higher norm roles is one strategy for overcoming this problem. However, that involves bridging and linking to the children and their networks. This depends on the appropriateness of strategies and the degree of openness of communities to outsiders.

- The ability to engage children depends on how open their communities are. Schools, ministries of education, federal departments and teachers will have to depend on the target groups having accepted or incorporated aspects of the dominant culture and goals to connect with their programs and resources; or the dominant culture and its institutions can adopt, and adapt to, the Aboriginal minority culture and create an openness context to connect in that manner. Such adaptation must be context specific. However, even where connections can take place, there is no guarantee of any buy-in to goals of educational attainment.
- Enthusiasm for education is linked to seeing a purpose for the effort. This point is key particularly where past experience has been negative for parents. For example, residential schooling in Canada and Australia created a legacy of mistrust and anger among Aboriginal peoples. The key to providing purpose is related to the development of community or related capacity.

Future Research

The development of a better understanding of the interrelationship between the four identified elements is the next step. This should involve two separate processes. First, the development of methods to measure the different elements will allow us to produce useful diagnostic tools. This is a long-term project but quite important. The second process is to develop a simple planning tool that gives its user a way to draw conclusions about the relative problems across the four dimensions: levels of social capital, norm effects, cultural openness, and community capacity. The planning tool could be a crude guide to assess existing programs, diagnose problems, and design improvements.

Notes

1 We thank the New Zealand Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Maori Development for providing so much detailed information. While we had many sources of information on New Zealand, to ensure accuracy we took all factual information from the supplied reports, and did not use secondary material, unless it was verified by the ministry reports.

2 "The programs involved Education Enrichment Centres where students can study afterschool, with supervision and support. Homework and individual tutoring was undertaken. The centres were set up with educational resources including computers with internet access.... Students were assigned a school-based mentor... who also worked on well-being. Extra curricular activities could be arranged to develop confidence and abilities including ... visits to industry ... and cultural awareness camps"(Western Australia Department of Education, nd: 27).

3 In Canada, education falls under provincial jurisdiction in the Constitution. However, note that INAC funds basic elementary and secondary education for the 120,000 students who live on reserve, just as provincial governments do for all other students in Canada. These students attend both First Nation schools (496 across Canada) and provincial schools, depending on the services available in their area. Approximately 60 percent attend First Nation schools, and 63 percent of First Nation classrooms are elementary. Many students must travel to provincial schools for high school. Funding pays for instructional services, such as teacher salaries in First Nation schools and payment to provincial school boards for reserve students, student support services, including room and board for students living away from home for high school, and transportation (INAC, 2004).

The federal government also provides funding that supports roughly 26,000 First Nation and Inuit students in post-secondary education each year. About 4,000 of these students graduate annually.

4 For information on measures and target goals, see the full report of the Cowichan Valley School District.

5 See the full report "Cowichan Valley Aboriginal Education Improvement Agreement Report 2002-2003" Cowichan Valley School District.

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Commentary on "Impacts of Social Capital on Educational Attainment in Aboriginal Communities: Lessons from Australia, Canada, and New Zealand"

Erik Anderson, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada

The idea of social capital as an important factor of well-being, albeit a difficult one to measure, has gained considerable currency in academic circles within developed countries. Indian and Northern Affairs Canada has an interest in the application of social capital theory in an Aboriginal community context. The paper by White, Spence, and Maxim looks at the impacts of social capital on educational attainment through an examination of select Aboriginal educational programming in Australia, Canada, and New Zealand. Some important themes raised in their paper include the need to look at existing social capital and cultural openness, and to understand unique cultural conceptions of social capital.

Social capital refers to the networks of social relations that may provide individuals and groups with access to resources and supports. Aboriginal social capital is perhaps best understood as a combination of tradition and modernity. While culture and tradition clearly inform current relationships, social capital can be considered in the context of traditionally oriented networks (family, clan, treaty relationships, etc.) as well as more modern networks (various levels of government, industry, tribal council, etc.).

Two key considerations in the use of social capital for federal policy development in the Aboriginal context are the role the federal government can or should play in promoting positive social capital toward a desired outcome (e.g., increased educational attainment) and how to create policies or programs that will not adversely impact the existing, perhaps culturally unique aspects of, social capital. The history of colonization and Indian policy in Canada has resulted in a series of disruptions to existing Aboriginal social capital – from the policy of reserve creation, to the imposition of the *Indian Act* through to relocations, residential schooling, and beyond. To not take existing social capital into consideration may risk repeating an unsavoury historical legacy of damage to the social capital networks that are integral to community well-being.

White, Spence, and Maxim have made a cogent argument that social capital considerations on their own may not be enough to effect desired outcomes. Among the other factors to be considered, they argue, are the existing levels of social capital and the notion of building relationships based on cultural context, or cultural openness. The New Zealand example offered in their study is significant in that both the issues of promoting positive social capital through this concept of cultural openness and mitigating any negative impact on existing social capital have been dealt with by developing policy around a uniquely Maori concept of social capital. Instead of simply imposing a policy designed to create social capital to effect a desired outcome, or attempting to incorporate Maori social capital into an existing policy direction, policy and program development are integrated into culturally unique Maori concepts of social capital and more traditionally oriented networks. An understanding of how these networks operate has allowed policy makers in New Zealand to use them, in a close working relationship with Maori, to implement programs within a Maori cultural context.

Social capital can indeed be an effective public policy tool, if not an essential consideration, in the area of Aboriginal policy and program development. Much research has been undertaken to attempt to demonstrate empirically what we intuitively feel to be true – that various levels of networks within and between communities have an impact on overall well-being. White, Spence, and Maxim demonstrate that a better understanding of social capital in an Aboriginal context, and from an Aboriginal perspective, can improve upon the effectiveness of government policies and programming. Further, there is a very real risk that harm can be done through the development of policies that do not take social capital into account. There is also a risk that otherwise well-intentioned attempts by government to build formal networks may have negative impacts on existing formal or more informal networks. The best way to avoid this is to better understand how social capital works in an Aboriginal context, and develop policies in partnership with Aboriginal communities and organizations that can be integrated into existing networks and practices most effectively.

YOUTH CIVIC ENGAGEMENT IN CANADA: IMPLICATIONS FOR PUBLIC POLICY

Dietlind Stolle and Cesi Cruz, McGill University

Introduction

"If you don't care about politics, then politics will take care of you." Everywhere in Canada are political slogans – as this one by the Bloc Quebecois leader Gilles Duceppe illustrates – directed at young voters in an effort to get them to participate in Canadian federal elections (*Toronto Star*, 2004). Yet, even as political parties scramble for support from youth, young Canadians seem to be turning their backs on electoral politics in unprecedented numbers. Canada is not the only country facing such youth disengagement. In several advanced industrialized democracies, particularly in the United States, youth electoral participation is down.

The highly visible decline of youth electoral participation is connected to a broader concern in the academic literature over a decline in young people's civic engagement (Paxton, 1999; Putnam, 2000; Rahn and Transue, 1998). Civic engagement refers to playing an active role in the social and political life of one's community. The argument about the decline of civic engagement generates multiple concerns. First and foremost, recent literature on social capital has demonstrated successfully that "civicness" and citizen engagement within a society have beneficial effects on the functioning of political institutions, individual well-being, and economic growth. If our societies generate fewer and fewer such resources, our democratic and economic systems will eventually be affected. Second, political socialization studies suggest that some of the most basic democratic attitudes and behaviours are ingrained early in the life cycle through family experiences, civic education, and peer and other social relationships, and they remain remarkably stable throughout a lifetime. So, the long-term consequences of changing social and political involvement patterns of Canadian youth might be felt for many generations to come.

The most prominent scholar arguing that younger age groups are deserting civic and political life is the Harvard social capital scholar, Robert Putnam (2000: 247-276). Putnam is concerned that declining civic engagement in the United States indicates that a country's stock of social capital is depleting. Putnam has defined social capital as "social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them" (2000: 19). He argues that social networks can be a powerful asset for individuals and communities. Social networks of community engagement may be particularly useful in producing norms of generalized trust and reciprocity, and societies in which these values blossom are far more efficient and able to co-operate for mutual benefit than are distrustful societies. A decline in civic engagement and social capital by younger generations of Americans is problematic, because it threatens the equal representation and inclusion of young generations in political decision making and public life. As well, according to Putnam, there is an additional danger that the lack of social capital negatively affects institutional effectiveness, economic well-being, and the quality of democracy in our societies (2000: 20-22; see also Knack and Keefer, 1997).

By drawing on various time series, Putnam demonstrated that young people in the United States participate less than older citizens, and are less likely to get involved than the young people of just a few decades ago. He attributed most of the responsibility for the decline in levels of civic engagement in US society since the 1970s to a process of generational replacement, whereby the "long civic generation" that was socialized around World War II is replaced by younger cohorts who are less likely to become involved in public affairs. Putnam's verdict on this Generation X is rather harsh: "Unlike [baby] boomers, who were once engaged, X'ers have never made the connection to politics, so they emphasize the personal and private over the public and collective" (Putnam, 2000: 259). Other authors have presented similar evidence that younger age cohorts in the United States are less trusting, less likely to vote, and tend to emphasize material goals in their lives.

This report examines the state of youth civic engagement or disengagement in Canada, and considers the implications of current trends for public policy. First, we examine the status of civic engagement and social capital of young Canadians. Are Canadian youth participating less in civic life over the last decades? If so, who are the most disengaged youth? The second section reviews hypotheses that have been offered as explanations for trends in youth civic disengagement. It also examines whether young Canadians are engaged in new forms of civic participation that might substitute for the potential decline in traditional civic engagement. The third part briefly surveys the potential consequences of diminished youth engagement for Canadian democracy and public life. We then examine several possibilities to enhance and invigorate the political engagement of young Canadians. We rely here on the research on civic education and social networks in advanced industrialized democracies. Finally, this paper draws lessons from the research for future policy and program development in the area of youth civic engagement.

Youth Civic Engagement in Canada: Status and Trends

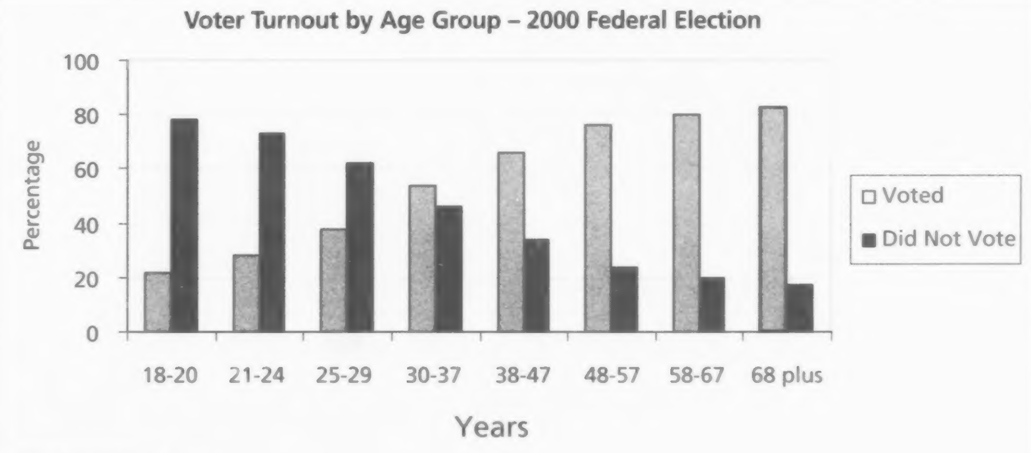
How Engaged Are Canadian Youth?

This section examine recent trends with respect to voting, membership in political parties, political knowledge, political interest, membership in associations, volunteering, and generalized trust among Canadian youth. The most important aspect of this analysis is not whether young Canadians do more or less of all these activities compared to older age groups, but whether young Canadians today are less engaged than their parents or grandparents at a similar life stage. In other words, we need to distinguish life cycle from generational effects. The former suggests that the decline in participation is temporary and once young citizens become adults and enter their professional and family life, they will be just as engaged as older citizens. By contrast, the latter perspective implies a systematic social change in that young generations are fundamentally different compared to the older cohorts in similar life stages. Any analysis of trends needs to understand which of those two phenomena we are observing.

Voting

Canadian youth vote at an alarmingly lower rate than all other age groups (see Figure 1). According to Elections Canada, only 25 percent of 18 to 24 year olds voted in the 2000 general election, compared to the general turnout of 64 percent. Preliminary results from Elections Canada's analysis of youth participation in the 2004 general election indicate the turnout rate for first time voters (18 to 21½ year olds) was 38.7 percent, compared to the general turnout of 60.9 percent. While this may suggest an increase in youth turnout, the different methodologies used in

Figure 1



Actual numbers below:

	Age in 2000								
Voted in 2000	**68+**	**58-67**	**48-57**	**38-47**	**30-37**	**25-29**	**21-24**	**18-20**	**Total percent**
Yes	83.3	80.4	76.4	66.2	54.2	38.2	27.5	22.4	61.3
No	16.7	19.6	23.6	33.8	45.8	61.8	72.5	77.6	38.7

N = 2 467
V = .392 p < .000

Source: Pammett and LeDuc (2003).

Elections Canada's analyses preclude a direct comparison of the 2000 and 2004 elections (Elections Canada, 2004).

Some scholars argue that young people have always been less likely to vote than their older counterparts, but that their propensity to vote increases as they age. We must therefore ask whether the figures reveal a cohort effect, rather than merely demonstrating once more the curvilinear relation between age and participation levels (Norris, 2002). It is a well-established fact that most indicators of engagement have a curvilinear relationship to age: incentives for engagement increase as citizens grow older, enter the labour market, acquire houses, build families and have children, and become involved in school councils, and so on. At a certain age, this growth curve declines again as citizens go into retirement, and more frequently experience problems with regard to health or mobility (Verba et al., 1995). The mere finding that 20 year olds are less likely to engage than 40 year olds therefore should not come as a surprise. Evidence for a cohort effect can only be established if one succeeds in comparing 20 year olds across various time periods or generations. While there is some proof of a cohort-related decline of civic engagement in the United States, for other Western societies the available evidence is, at best, mixed (Hall, 2002; Rothstein, 2002). The question is whether Canada follows the US model in this respect or not.

Canada's chief electoral officer reported that the propensity of every Canadian to abstain from voting has increased by about three percentage points since 1990. However, even after accounting for both the life cycle and period effects, youth still seem to be disengaging at higher rates than previous generations of young people. This generational effect implies that not only are youth voting at lower rates than adults, but also that today's youth are voting at significantly lower rates than previous generations at the same age. Several studies have confirmed that compared to the pre-baby boomers, the most recent cohorts exhibited a turnout rate that is at least 20 percentage points lower (Blais et al., 2004; O'Neill, 2001; Pammet and LeDuc, 2003). In other words, generational differences are the key to explaining overall voter turnout decline over time in Canada from 88 to 81 percent (see Table 1). As they get older, newer generations of Canadians, who are less likely to vote, constitute an increasing share of the population (Blais et al., 2001).

International research indicates that the problem of low youth turnout is not unique to Canada. Similar patterns appear in the United Kingdom and the United States, for example (Donovan and Lopez, 2004). In his examination of turnout in nine countries in 1996-97, André Blais (2000: 52) concluded that "the two most crucial socio-economic determinants of voting are education and age. The gap between the least and the most educated and between the youngest and the eldest is a huge 20 points."

Table 1: Reported Voting by Age Cohort, 1990 and 2000

	Voting	
Birth Cohort	**1990** **%**	**2000** **%**
1973-1982	—	66
1963-1972	74	69
1953-1962	85	85
1943-1952	93	92
Before 1943	93	91
Total	88	81

Source: O'Neill (2001).

Table 2: Age of Party Members in Canada, 2002

Age	Party Members %	General Population %
80 or older	8	3
70-79	24	6
65-69	13	4
55-64	21	9
40-54	24	23
30-39	7	16
Under 30	6	40

Source: Cross and Young (2004).

Given the analysis of Canadian and comparative data, we conclude that the present cohort of young people vote at rates significantly lower than those of previous generations. Unfortunately, these trends suggest that the recent overall decline in voter turnout may continue.

Political Party Membership

Membership in political parties is in decline across many advanced industrialized democracies including Canada. Some comparative evidence suggests that youth party membership is heading toward a steeper decline than general party membership (Hooghe et al., 2004). In Canada, youth are also disproportionately underrepresented in political parties (see Table 2). Only two percent of young Canadians reported being a party member in 2000 (O'Neill, 2001). The average

Table 3: Age of Party Members, 2002

	Overall	Conservatives	Liberals	CA	NPD	Bloc	General Population
80 or older (%)	8	9	3	11	10	6	3
70-79 (%)	24	27	19	30	20	17	6
65-69 (%)	13	14	10	16	9	13	4
55-64 (%)	21	22	21	20	20	25	9
40-54 (%)	24	17	28	17	32	26	23
30-39 (%)	7	7	8	5	7	9	16
Under 30 (%)	6	5	13	2	3	5	40
N	3791	863	888	1034	604	401	

Source: Cross and Young (2004).

age of party members in Canada is 59. Consequently, although Canadians under 30 years old constitute 40 percent of the general population, only six percent of total party members are under 30 (see Table 3). These low levels of youth participation occur despite the fact that political parties have tried to connect with youth, especially through youth-friendly media, such as web sites and text-message lines.

As O'Neill suggested (2001: 13), the low rate of participation among youth in political parties is not a result of institutional barriers to access, "since joining a political party often involves little more than a phone call to a constituency office or a visit to a website." Rather, the lack of involvement among young Canadians is likely a result of preferences for other means of political engagement or, perhaps, a rejection of these existing political channels. Cross and Young (2004: 433) cited the preference of younger voters for "more direct political involvement over the mediated participation traditionally offered by Canada's political institutions." This preference may account for the recent rise of interest group politics as another avenue for younger Canadians to participate (O'Neill, 2001). While only two percent of young Canadians are involved in political parties, nine percent participate in interest groups (see Table 4). Interest groups are perceived as more effective agents for change, especially among youth. When asked which type of involvement was the "more effective way to work for change nowadays," 67 percent of 18 to 29 year olds chose interest groups, and only about 21 percent of young Canadians chose political parties (see Table 5). Unfortunately, the lack of adequate time-series data precludes an assessment of whether these trends are driven by life cycle or generational effects.

Table 4: Reported Participation in Political Parties and Interest Groups by Age Group, 2000[1]

	18-27 %	28-37 %	38-47 %	48-57 %	Over 57 %
Has been a political party member	2	9	15	26	33
Has been a member of an interest group	9	12	12	19	11

Source: O'Neill (2001).

Table 5: Perception of Effectiveness by Age Group, 2000

	18-29 %	30-45 %	46-60 %	61+ %
Joining a political party	20.9	15.6	20.9	30.1
Joining an interest group	66.6	65.3	51.5	44.2
Both	1.1	4.5	9.1	2.6
Neither	1.4	2.6	6.1	4.5
Don't know	10.0	12.0	12.5	18.6

Source: Howe and Northrup (2000).

Table 6: Political Knowledge by Age Group

Correctly Identify the:	Prime Minister	Minister of Finance	Official Opposition
18-27	84	22	20
28-37	89	46	34
38-47	93	46	34
48-57	93	61	45
over 57	89	65	48

Note: Entries are percentage of respondents who provided the correct answer. Question wording: "We would like to know how well some political figures are known. Can you tell me the name of the Prime Minister (the Federal Minister of Finance)?" and "Do you happen to know which party is the official opposition in Ottawa?"

Source: O'Neill (2001).

Political Knowledge

Compared to other Western democracies, Canadians have a relatively low level of what Milner (2001) terms "civic literacy," or the knowledge necessary for effective participation in the political system. In particular, young Canadians are less knowledgeable about politics than any other age group in the country, and perhaps more disturbingly, by a wider margin today than 10 years ago (see Table 6). Paul Howe's study (2001) of political knowledge in Canada, for example, showed that in 1956 about 23 percent of the youngest age group attained a high political knowledge ranking, whereas by 1984, only 11 percent of the 18 to 20 year old age group belonged to the high political knowledge category. According to Howe (2001: 80): "The persistence and magnitude of the political knowledge gaps separating younger and older cohorts indicate that young people born in the 1960s and on are exceptionally ill-informed, and will, at best, only partially close the gap as they age," a finding confirmed in the United States (Delli Carpini and Keeter, 1996).

Political Interest

Most surveys show that young Canadians are significantly less interested in politics than older Canadians (see Table 7 and Figure 2). According to O'Neill (2000: 11), among the 18 to 27 year old group, only 41 percent reported following politics at any level, in contrast to a range between 58 and 68 percent for the other age groups. However, O'Neill also noted that young Canadians today are not necessarily less interested in politics than other age cohorts at the same age, because there is little overall change in political interest for all age groups. Lower levels of political interest by Canadian youth may represent a life cycle rather than a generational cohort effect.

Associational Memberships

Beyond areas of traditional political involvement in the electoral process, the state of youth civic engagement in Canada is more encouraging. Youth continue to involve themselves in organizations and associations. According to Baer et al. (2001: 249), there is little evidence of an overall decline in associational memberships in Canada, and like most of the other countries in their study, for Canada the "overall pattern is one of stability, or no significant change." Youth in Canada are no exception. According to a 2003 Statistics Canada survey, youth participate in organizations at rates similar to other age groups. In fact, with the exception of the oldest age group, "there was relatively little variation in the overall incidence of organizational membership/participation across age groups, with this ranging between 60% and 64% among persons aged 15-64" (Statistics Canada, 2003: 13). Indeed, Canadian youth membership and participation in groups and organizations increased slightly from 44 percent in 1997 to 47 percent in 2000, offsetting a slight decline for Canadians between the ages of 35 and 64 (see Figure 3).

Table 7: Attention to Politics by Age Group, 2000

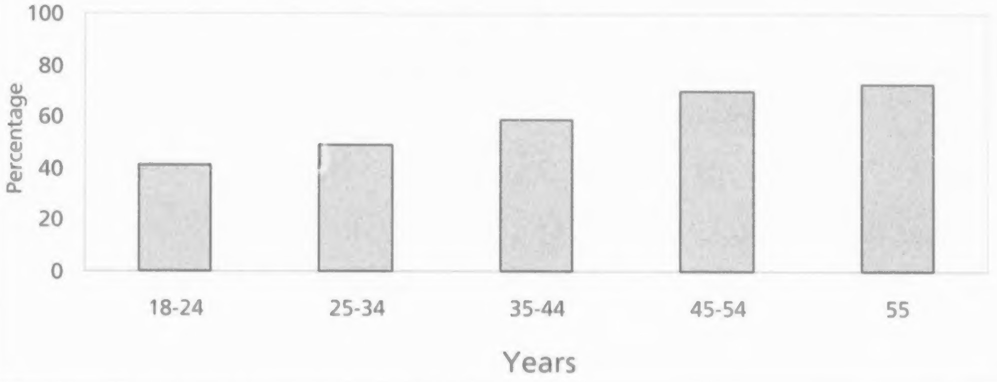
	18-27 %	28-37 %	38-47 %	48-57 %	Over 57 %
Very or fairly closely	41	59	58	64	68
Not very closely or Not at all	59	41	42	36	32

Source: O'Neill (2001).

Figure 2

Interest in Politics by Age Group

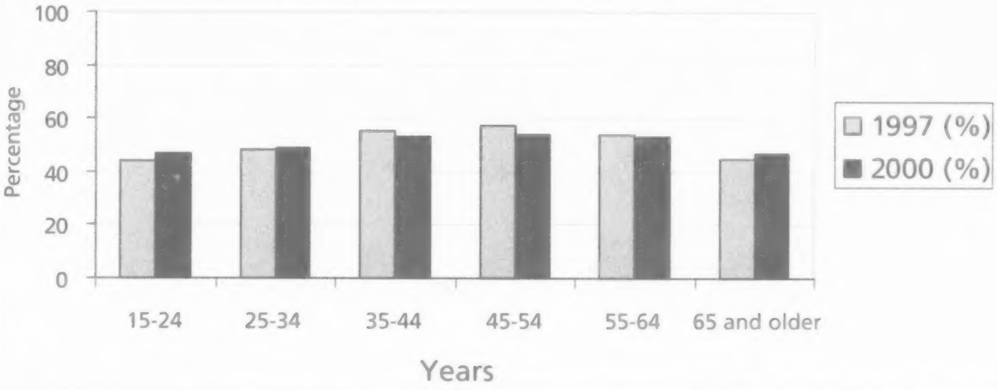
QUESTION: In general, would you say you follow politics and public issues very closely, somewhat closely, not too closely, or not at all?
(Figure shows the production saying very or somewhat closely.)



Source: CRIC, Portraits of Canada, 2001.

Figure 3

Membership in Organizations or Groups by Age, 1997 and 2000



Note: Groups: work-related, sports/recreation, religious, community/school related, cultural/ educational/hobby, service club/fraternal, political.

Source: Hall et al. (2001).

The World Values Survey has measured participation in several voluntary groups in Canada for 1981, 1990, and 2000. The data reveal that membership in churches, unions, and political parties dropped for all age groups over this time span, yet the decline for the young age cohort did not show any indications of being more pronounced than for older age groups (authors' calculations). In contrast, for all other types of associations (e.g., those that deal with education, social welfare, professional groups, and environmental organizations), there has been an apparent rise in membership across all age groups. Canada is not alone in this respect. In several Western countries, traditional types of organizations, such as parties, unions, and churches are not as frequented anymore (see also Putnam, 2002). Instead, young as well as older citizens have increasingly chosen to join educational and other types of groups that perhaps do not reflect a hierarchical organizational structure and deal with issue-specific interests. This seems to stand in contrast to the findings of Putnam in the United States where a wider variety of groups demonstrate a decline.

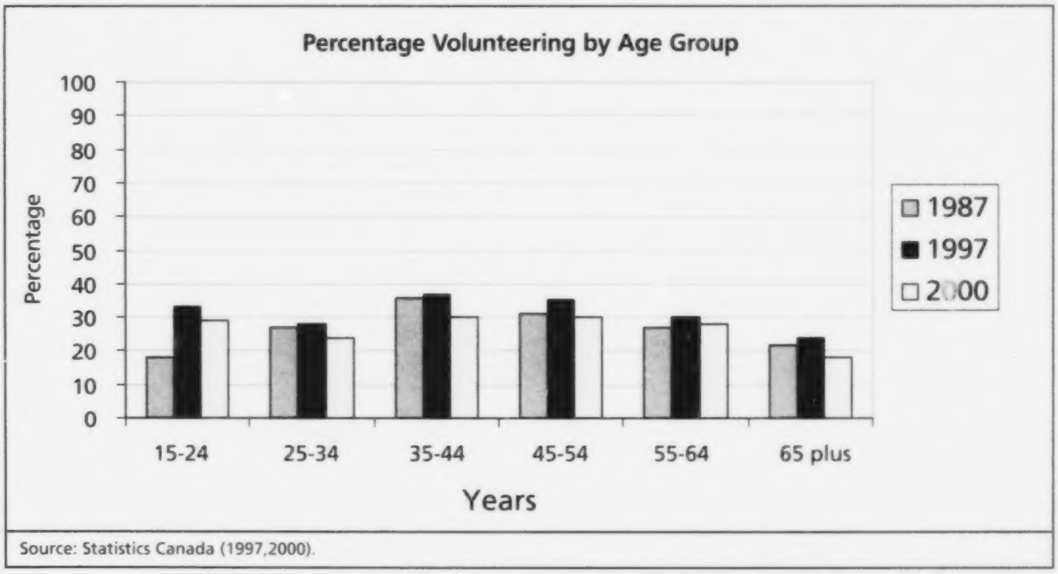
Volunteering

The picture of youth volunteerism in Canada is mixed, but largely positive. One promising finding is that Canadian youth are volunteering at higher rates than other age groups. Young volunteers, especially post-secondary students, constituted a principal source of incoming volunteers in the 1990s (Hall et al., 2001). In fact, according to the 2000 National Survey on Giving, Volunteering and Participating, 15 to 24 year olds accounted for 18 percent of all volunteers and almost 15 percent of all volunteer hours in Canada (see also Figure 4).

However, when a distinction is made between school-age youth (15 to 19 year olds) and working-age youth (20 to 25 year olds), the results are more mixed. The overall high rates of youth volunteering can be explained by very high rates of volunteering among school-age youth that offset the below-average rates of volunteering among working-age youth. In 2000, 37 percent of 15 to 19 year olds volunteered, compared to only 22 percent of 20 to 24 year olds (D-Code, 2003); 15 to 19 year old volunteers also contributed an average of 136 hours, compared to 121 hours contributed by 20 to 24 year olds (D-Code, 2003). These trends are also evident in the United States, where 15 to 25 year olds volunteer at the highest rates of any age group. According to Keeter et al. (2002: 19), much of this difference "is due to the influence of high schools and colleges."

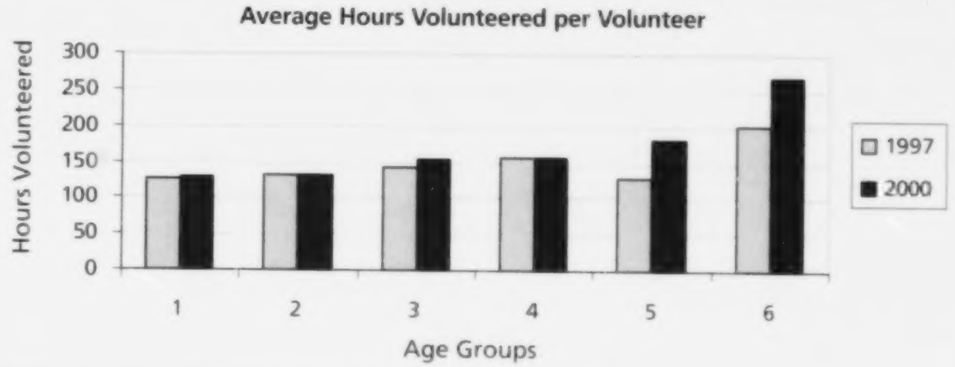
The high rate of volunteering among 15 to 19 year olds can be partially attributed to the rise in mandatory community service programs in secondary schools. Among young volunteers in 2000, 35 percent reported that their volunteer work was required by their school, employer, or the government (McClintock, 2004), compared to only seven percent of volunteers from all age groups (Hall et al., 2001).

Figure 4



Source: Statistics Canada (1997,2000).

Figure 5



Source: Compiled from Reed and Selbee (2000), Figure 4, and Hall et al. (2001).

However, although more Canadian youth are volunteering as a result of mandatory programs, young volunteers are not necessarily devoting more time to it (see Figure 5). According to Reed and Selbee (2000: 21), between 1987 and 1997, the amount of time volunteered per volunteer declined, including among youth. In fact, the 15 to 24 year old age group exhibited the largest declines in average hours per volunteer. As Reed and Selbee concluded, "since this group has a very large increase in rates, this indicates that the large majority of the new volunteers in this group gave below-the-mean hours" (p. 9). These findings are consistent with research in the United States that characterizes the young generation as being often on the run, distracted, and less deeply engaged. Keeter et al. (2002: 17) observed that volunteering in the United States is characterized by episodic, non-political involvement. In particular, youth "are the most episodic in their efforts, most apt to be volunteering because of the assistance of an outside group, and least likely to turn to volunteer work to address social or political problems."

In sum, volunteering generally is on the rise for young citizens, as more young Canadians engage in such activities mostly because of required programs. However, the rate of volunteering "does not stick," as youth leaving schools volunteer much less. Furthermore, we observe a substantial decrease in average hours from 1987 particularly for the youngest volunteers. In short, young citizens are engaged in volunteer activities, but it seems in a more and more sporadic and episodic manner.

Generalized Trust

With regard to generalized trust, there is no significant difference among age groups according to the 2003 General Social Survey (see Table 8). Youth are not necessarily less trusting of others, and in fact, according to Statistics Canada, around half (50.4 percent) of all Canadians under age 30 believe that "people can be trusted," a number that is comparable to rates for other age groups. In contrast, other surveys (World Value Canada as well as the Equality, Security and Community survey)

Table 8: General Perceptions of Trust, by Age, 2003

	People Can Be Trusted %	Cannot Be Too Careful in Dealing With People %	Not Stated %
Less than 30	50.4	46.6	3.0
30-49	53.6	42.3	4.1
50-64	56.9	39.0	4.1
65 or older	48.8	42.4	8.8
Total	52.8	42.7	4.5

Source: O'Neill (2001).

show that young age cohorts are significantly less trusting than older age groups.[2] This said, these surveys do not indicate a generational effect here.

Feelings of Attachment

According to the 2003 General Social Survey, the majority of Canadians in all age groups (78 percent or more) reported very strong or somewhat strong feelings of belonging to Canada. However, feelings of belonging increase as Canadians age: only 40 percent of 15 to 24 year old Canadians reported very strong feelings of belonging to Canada, compared with 52.8 percent of 45 to 54 year olds and 71.5 percent of those aged 75 and above (Statistics Canada, 2003). We believe that feelings of belonging are strongly related to life cycle events, such as marriage or partnership, settling down, perhaps with a family, long-term employment. In other words, without having access to other data, we expect younger generations to develop feelings of belonging and attachment as they grow older.

In sum, the status of youth civic engagement in Canada is, at best, mixed and, at worst, discouraging. We have found evidence of serious political disengagement and fairly sporadic societal engagement by Canadian youth, and most important, younger generations are clearly less engaged on a variety of dimensions than the older generations were at similar ages. There is less clear-cut evidence that non-political engagement and trust are in similar decline, but more long-term data are necessary to confirm this conclusion.

Which Youth Are Disengaged?

Before discussing the reasons for a decline in youth civic engagement, it is important to understand which youth are not participating in order to create more focused strategies for promoting youth civic engagement. Political participation studies have long concluded that the route to more participation is at least partially anchored in the distribution of socio-economic resources, such as income and education. For governments, the importance of resources also necessitates a focus on how political or social structures and institutions determine which people or groups have access to socio-economic resources, and which people or groups are marginalized. After all, institutions and policies do not always level the playing field and, at worst, might exacerbate existing socio-economic inequalities. As a result, in addition to discussing the role of income or education in fostering engagement, it is equally important to identify those groups that have traditionally faced political, social, or institutional barriers to attaining higher education or entering the work force.

Resources: Education and Income

Education

Human capital is a particularly key factor for civic engagement, and above all for youth. Rubenson, et al. (2004: 7) found that the impact of both education and income plays a larger role in determining voting behaviour among young Canadians than for older Canadians. Delli Carpini and Keeter (1996) also confirmed these results, noting significant gaps in knowledge between Americans with low socio-economic status and those with high socio-economic status, and that these gaps were more pronounced among youth. Finally, Torney-Purta (2001) found that young citizens who had parents with more books in their homes across several democracies were much more interested in participation in political and social issues than those in homes with fewer books.

Education fosters engagement in a number of ways. First, education equips citizens with the knowledge necessary to understand democratic institutions (Gidengil et al., 2004) and make informed political decisions (Wolfe and Haveman, 2001). Second, education provides citizens with cognitive skills to learn about politics through the media, as well as communication skills for political participation, such as the ability to sign petitions and mark ballots (Norris, 2002). Third, education can "foster civic spirit and norms of civic engagement," which encourage political participation (Gidengil et al., 2004: 7).[3] Fourth, education plays a role in creating "social networks in which politics is likely to be a topic of conversation" (Gidengil et al., 2004: 7). Such political discussions can both provide citizens with more information about politics and encourage greater interest and attention to politics as well as mobilization into further political and civic engagement (Gidengil et al., 2004).

Among youth in Canada, education plays a significant role in determining voter behaviour. Rubenson et al. (2004: 5) found that "education has a larger effect on young citizens' likelihood of voting than it does for older people." This is confirmed by Gidengil et al. (2003a): "the more education young people have, the more likely they are to vote." Their findings in the 2000 Canadian Election Study show that among youth, turnout was "almost 50 points higher among university graduates than it was among those who left school without a high school diploma." Education also affects other ways in which youth engage in

Table 9: Education and Volunteering

Education	Age Group: 15-34 Years	
	Volunteering Rate %	Average Hours Volunteered %
Less than high school	29	119
High school diploma	22	120
Some post-secondary	32	156
Post-secondary diploma	20	135
Undergraduate degree	30	125
Graduate degree	38*	139*

Note: * Sample size limitations affect the reliability of these estimates.

Source: D-Code (2003).

civic society. Both education and student status increased the likelihood of volunteering among youth. Among youth with less than a high school education, only 29 percent volunteered, compared to 38 percent of those with a graduate degree (D-Code, 2003). In addition, 35 percent of full-time students volunteer, compared to 28 percent of part-time students (Table 9). This suggests that education is a crucial factor in explaining the growing divide between youth who are engaged and those who are marginalized.

Income

In addition to being strongly correlated with education levels, income also plays a role in providing access to resources that enable youth voting (Wolfinger and Rosenstone, 1980). Income also facilitates other forms of civic engagement. According to the 2000 National Survey of Giving, Volunteering, and Participating, 48 percent of 15 to 24 year olds from households with annual incomes of less than $20,000 reported participating in volunteer activities, compared with 66 percent of 15 to 24 year olds from households with incomes higher than $100,000 (Imagine Canada, 2000). Socio-economic resources, therefore, introduce strong biases for political participation. Those with more resources are usually overrepresented when it comes to voicing their opinions and influencing public policies – a finding that is equally true for Canadian adults and youth (see also Verba et al., 1995).

Minority Youth Engagement: Aboriginal and Immigrant Youth, and Gender

Aboriginal Youth

The issue of youth engagement is particularly important for Aboriginal groups, because of their large youth population. According to the 2001 Census, half of all Aboriginal people are aged 24 or younger, compared to only 31 percent of the population in Canada (Statistics Canada, 2001). In addition to having a more youthful population than the rest of Canada, Aboriginal people also tend to be more transient, and have lower levels of income and education than the general population. As these factors are all associated with low levels of voting and civic engagement it is not surprising that Aboriginal turnout for the 2000 federal election was 16 percentage points lower than the general turnout rate, at only 48 percent. However, turnout rates varied across communities (in some areas matching or exceeding general turnout rates). Electoral participation in band turnout elections is substantially higher,[1] perhaps reflecting the greater relevance of local governance to the everyday lives of Aboriginal people.

Despite government efforts to reach out to Aboriginal people, they are less likely to contact the government and receive government information than the general population. In a 2001 survey commissioned by Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, only 24 percent of Aboriginal people reported having contacted the Government of Canada in the past three months, compared to 37 percent of the general population. The level of contact was significantly lower among youth (18 to 25), and among Aboriginal people with lower levels of education and income (EKOS Research, 2001). In the same survey, a majority of Aboriginal respondents indicated they were largely unaware of government efforts to communicate with them through toll-free numbers and web sites.

There are few studies on civic engagement among Aboriginal youth in Canada, because of the sample size limitations encountered when studying Aboriginal youth as part of a larger scale project. Even projects aimed specifically at Aboriginal groups can have difficulties applying conventional indicators of social capital to assess the level of engagement of Aboriginal groups. In

Australia, for example, one study of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders found that a significant amount of volunteer work takes place within indigenous communities (as opposed to involvement with volunteering organizations), making it difficult to use the same indicators of volunteering as in the general population (Johnston et al., 2004). As a result, many studies stress the importance of expanding conventional definitions of volunteering and looking beyond the formal volunteering sector to account for informal groups within communities.[5]

In Canada, the 1997 National Survey on Giving, Volunteering, and Participating collected information on both formal volunteering and informal volunteering, or volunteering that is not done through an organization. Examples of informal volunteering include caring for the elderly or for children, helping someone with chores or tasks, and other service activities that are conducted on a personal basis (Mata et al., 2000). The survey found that making the distinction between formal and informal volunteering was crucial to understanding volunteering activity of Aboriginal youth. For example, although Aboriginal males had the lowest formal volunteering rates at three percent, they also had the highest participation rate (55 percent) for the informal volunteering activity of visiting the sick and the elderly (Mata et al., 2000).

Immigrants

For immigrant youth, the problems associated with settlement, particularly feelings of social exclusion, are compounded by the difficulties faced by all youth, such as coping with transitions from school to work and developing their own identities and values (Omidvar and Richmond, 2003). According to Anisef and Kilbride (2000), immigrant youth that arrive between the ages of 16 and 20 are too young for immigrant programs for adults and too old to benefit from a gradual integration process that schools and families can promote for children. As a result, immigrant youth "need academic support, parental and community involvement, and cross-cultural understanding of their unique circumstances and experiences." (Anisef and Kilbride, 2000: 21).

In particular, immigrant youth face difficulties in reconciling the "dual sources of identity, when home and peer groups come from different cultures" (Anisef and Kilbride, 2000: 12). According to Sima Komeilinejad, an educator at CultureLink, a settlement services agency in Toronto, the generational differences in integration and adjustments can cause families to experience conflicts and problems (Cited in Biswas, 2000). Children and youth typically take only a year to integrate into Canadian life, while for their parents it can take three years or more (Biswas, 2000). Consequently, both parents and youth need support to deal with the adjustment and integration process, and the potential conflicts it can cause within families.

According to the 2003 General Social Survey, the majority of immigrants (84 percent), reported a strong or somewhat strong feeling of belonging to Canada. The General Social Survey found that for immigrants, the length of residence in Canada and in their local community played a much larger role in cultivating a sense of belonging than age. In addition, it is often found that immigrants trust other people less, most likely because many immigrants come to Canada from low trust societies and have experienced authoritarian regimes (Soroka et al., forthcoming).

At the same time, racism and discrimination pose problems for immigrant youth, especially for those who are members of a visible minority. According to a study conducted by the Canadian Council on Social Development (CCSD) in 2000, school-aged youth reported experiencing discrimination at school, while older youth emphasized discrimination when looking for employment. As a result, although immigrant youth generally feel well integrated and happy to be in Canada, the vast majority of focus group participants in the CCSD study said that it was difficult for them to feel accepted as Canadian by others (Hanvey and Kunz, 2000).

Gender

Although research on civic engagement has traditionally indicated that women are less involved than men, more recent research has focused on the fact that women engage in politics differently, but not necessarily less than men, a phenomenon that sometimes results in a reverse gender gap (Hooghe and Stolle, 2004; Lowndes, 2000; Stolle and Micheletti, forthcoming). For example, the gender gap in political knowledge has been well documented in numerous cross-national studies (Delli Carpini and Keeter, 1996; Gidengil et al., 2004). Women have less political knowledge than men, even when such factors as education, income, and child-rearing responsibilities are considered (Gidengil et al., 2003b). According to the 13-item political knowledge scale used by Gidengil et al. (2003b: 7) women averaged a score of 7.1, while men averaged 8.9, which means that men got almost two more correct answers than women did.

There is also a gender gap in Canadian political parties (Cross and Young, 2004; Howe and Northrup, 2000). Cross and Young found that 62 percent of party members are men. Although there are differences across parties (women make up 47 percent of the Liberal party's membership and 46 percent of the NDP's ranks, for example, while accounting for only 33 percent of the Conservative party membership), men are the majority in all of the parties surveyed.

The gender gap narrows when it comes to participation in groups. In Canada, 53 percent of men are members of groups and organizations; women participate at a slightly lower rate of 48 percent (Hall et al., 2001). However, there are differences in terms of the types of associations in which men and women participate. Men are more involved than women in sports teams, business associations, and labour unions, while women tend to have higher participation rates than men in community service groups and women's associations (Gidengil et al., 2003b).

Voting is another aspect of engagement that has experienced a closing of the gender gap in recent decades. According to Pammett and LeDuc (2003: 8), men and women are now found in both voting and non-voting groups in equal proportions. Blais et al. (2004: 3) found that the generational pattern of turnout decline in Canada is "basically the same among men and women," but that women experience a drop in turnout in the later stages of life.

The gender gap is actually reversed slightly when it comes to volunteering and more informal ways of participation. Women volunteer at comparable or slightly higher rates than men, a finding that holds cross-nationally. According to Hall et al. (2001), 33 percent of Canadian women are volunteers, a slightly higher percentage than the 29 percent of male volunteers. In the United States, according to the US Department of Labor (2004), 32 percent of women volunteer, compared to 25 percent of men. This relationship held across age groups, education levels, and other demographic characteristics. However, by the age of 14, girls are oriented more toward social-movement related forms of participation than boys. Beyond volunteering, these activities include signing petitions, collecting funds for important causes, and a slightly higher desire for peaceful protests (Hooghe and Stolle, 2004).

Hypothesized Explanations for Youth Disengagement

Socio-economic resources, such as education and employment, are fundamental for youth engagement in society; similarly, the lack of these resources often creates the barriers for minority groups' full engagement. Although the overall improvement of education levels does not directly translate into more civic engagement within Canadian society,[6] socio-economic resources and education matter for each individual's involvement. The widening gap in electoral involvement and other forms of engagement between those with higher and lower levels of education suggests education is as important as ever. This said, scholars have suggested other factors that might explain the overall decline in youth civic engagement. Since no final conclusions have been reached, we discuss the most influential ones, such as increased television viewing, increased mobility, and delayed life cycle effects, rising cynicism, the impact of declining levels of political knowledge, as well as socialization effects. Finally, we examine the changing nature of youth involvement.

The Rise of Television

Putnam (2000: 246) famously argued that the rise of television and a million-channel universe has played a major role in declining civic engagement in the United States. "Americans at the end of the twentieth century were watching more TV, watching it more habitually, more pervasively, and more often alone, and watching more programs that were associated specifically with civic disengagement (entertainment, as distinct from news)." Putnam also noted that not only did the rise of television coincide with the decline in social connectedness, but that younger generations showed the greatest levels of television viewing and disengagement. "It is precisely those Americans most marked by this dependence on televised entertainment who were most likely to have dropped out of civic and social life – who spent less time with friends, were less involved in community organizations, and were less likely to participate in public affairs" (Putnam, 2000: 246). Television affects civic engagement in three ways:

- It takes time away from other activities.
- Select TV programs, such as soap operas might convey an extremely cynical message about society.
- It fosters individualism.

While Putnam acknowledged that these trends are circumstantial rather than conclusive evidence, he argued that the rise of television has been a "willing accomplice" if not a "ringleader" in American civic disengagement.

Youth Mobility and Delayed Life Cycle Effects

Some authors suggest that owing to youth mobility, young Canadians have less access to some traditional government means of information about an upcoming election, thus contributing to declining electoral participation. In the 2000 federal election, Elections Canada attempted to contact youth through in-person and mail campaigns. Elections Canada sent a householder to each residence to provide registration and voting information for the upcoming general election. According to Elections Canada, overall 35 percent of electors remembered seeing the householder, but only 28 percent of youth 18 to 34 recalled seeing the householder. Voter information cards were also sent to each citizen, with 83 percent of electors receiving their voter information card correctly addressed to them. However, voter information cards for young voters (18 to 34) were correctly addressed only 64 percent of the time; 26 percent of youth did not receive their voter information cards at all (Elections Canada, 2000). In contrast, the advertising campaign by Elections Canada (*Are you on the list?*) was comparatively more successful at reaching young voters. The television advertisements were seen by 86 percent of electors, and an equal percentage of youth. Young Canadians (18 to 34) also accessed Elections Canada's web site at a higher rate than average: 82 percent of youth reported visiting Elections Canada's web site, compared to 70 percent of total electors.

The difficulty experienced by Elections Canada in its mail and in-person attempts to reach youth is most readily explained by the fact that youth are more mobile than older people with families. Youth change addresses more frequently, because of school and job changes. Youth are waiting until later and later before settling down with numerous studies pointing to youth waiting increasingly longer before marriage and child-rearing.[7] Furthermore, the pathways that youth take to entering the work force have become more varied and divergent (D-Code, 2001). Today's students have a multitude of options – working while studying, participating in "second chance" programs to return to secondary school, and others (Bowlby and McMullen, 2002). Since we know that all of these elements of social integration are linked to civic engagement, it may be that civic engagement is just "postponed" (Beaujot, 2004). This phenomenon has been called delayed life-cycle effects. This would imply that younger generations are not necessarily less interested in civic life, but that they proceed more slowly toward engagement. If this is true, then Canadian youth may eventually engage just as much in civic life. However, this hypothesis has not yet been sufficiently tested, and it is unlikely that it provides the full explanation of youth disengagement patterns.[8]

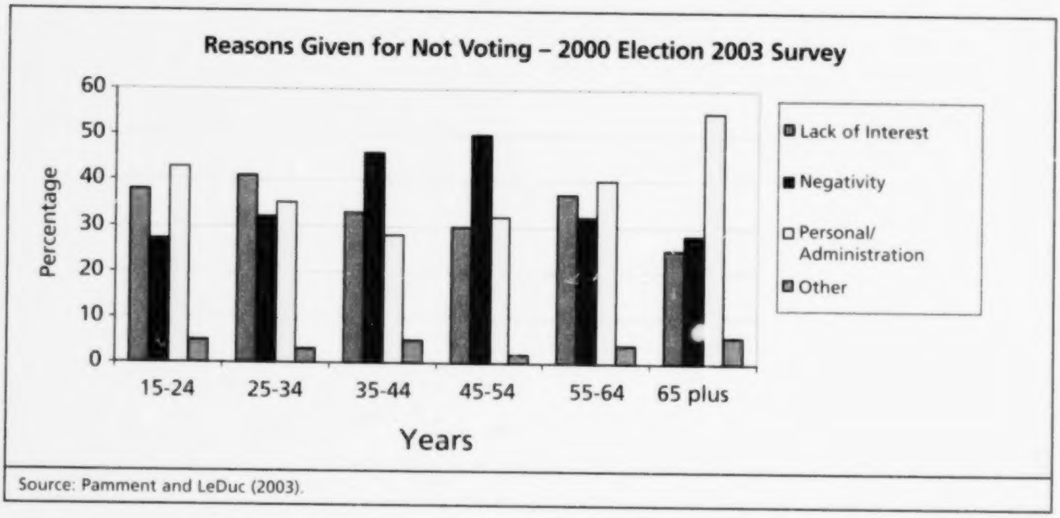
Rising Cynicism?

Are Canadian youth more politically cynical than older generations? One way of measuring cynicism is through the concept of internal political efficacy or the individual belief that one can understand and influence the government. Although 18 to 24 year olds are more likely to agree that their vote does not matter, according to Elections Canada (2000), the difference between the responses given by youth and older people is too small to account for the difference in turnout. As Figure 6 shows, non-voting youth cite the same reasons in similar percentages as adult non-voters. According to Nevitte et al. (2000: 63), "there is no relationship between age and cynicism. It is *not* because they are more cynical that the generation born after 1970 is less prone to vote." The evidence does not seem to support a connection between particularly pronounced disengagement among youth and their disproportionate amount of cynicism.

The Role of Political Knowledge

Earlier, we documented the decline of political knowledge among Canadian youth. Some authors argue that political knowledge is such an essential resource that it can be seen as the foundation of various types of political and civic engagement. For example, Milner (2001) proposed that civic literary is the key factor for explaining voter turnout decline in Canada. Similarly, Howe (2003) found that "there are two dynamics working together to drive turnout down among younger cohorts: *lower levels of knowledge*, the effects of which are magnified by the *escalating impact of knowledge* on participation." In other words, not only are today's young Canadians less knowledgeable than previous generations of Canadian youth, but the importance of political knowledge for promoting participation has also increased over time. Howe (2003) concluded that, as a result, "political knowledge is a critical factor – perhaps *the* critical factor – underlying cohort differences in voter turnout." Although the relationship between political knowledge and various

Figure 6



Source: Pamment and LeDuc (2003).

forms of political engagement is important, and points to several solutions in the educational realm to enhance youth political knowledge (see below), we are still left with the puzzle of why political knowledge depletes in the first place, particularly among youth. In other words, the decline of political knowledge is part of the symptom, but not as much of an explanation as to why young citizens are less involved in societal and political affairs.

Socialization Effects

It is clear that socialization effects within the family are particularly important for youth engagement (Jennings and Niemi, 1981). Parents shape political orientations and habits of civic involvement through direct support and role modelling. How can parental socialization explain the current disengagement of youth in the political or societal process? Bennich-Björkman (1998) argued that child-rearing practices vary from generation to generation, with children being raised at present as a fun-loving generation that is very I-oriented (as opposed to we-oriented). The claim is that such orientations will have direct consequences for people's outlook on the world around them.

Whereas the above argument might explain larger transformations of society, we may expect differences between family experiences to influence the orientations, attitudes, and engagement of their children as well. In other words, parents who value civic engagement, volunteering and helping others vis-à-vis their children might be able to affect their children's overall interest in politics and society differently from parents who do not talk about this directly. If the societal trend is that parents are less civically oriented, this will influence their children even more, as they experience the parents' values in the most important socialization phase of their lives. Parental influence works through role modelling as well, which can be seen perhaps as a more indirect effect of the family. Parents who are trusters have children who are more trusting (Stolle and Hooghe, 2004). Several studies have found that people who had parent volunteers were more likely to volunteer themselves (Rosenhan, 1970; Clary and Miller, 1986). Andolina et al. (2003: 277) found that "young people who were raised in homes where someone volunteered (43 percent of youth) are highly involved themselves – joining groups and associations, volunteering, wearing buttons, or displaying bumper stickers at rates higher than those who did not grow up with such examples." Similarly, "young adults who grow up amid regular political discussions are much more involved in a host of activities" related to civic engagement (Andolina et al., 2003: 277). Thirty-eight percent of youth from homes with frequent political discussions reported that they always voted, compared to only 20 percent of youth who have not experienced political discussions at home (Andolina et al., 2003: 277). In addition, parental membership in voluntary associations pays off for the child's social capital. Chan and Elder (2001) found, for example that parental social participation affects how a child is socially embedded especially when *both* parents are involved, and it pays off the most when both parents occupy leadership roles. Harell and Stolle (2005) found direct effects of parental involvement in clubs on children's volunteering, co-operative attitudes, and children's own club involvement. In sum, the values socialized and the experiences in family life have been shown to be an important source of a child's development of trust and other civic orientations and behaviours, which helps to determine their adult outlook on the world. However, as parental generations become more and more tuned out and opportunistic when it comes to civic engagement, we also would expect them to socialize their children along values of "free-riding," opportunism, and self-orientation. Tuned-out family socialization is probably one of the most steady influences on the value system of young people today.

New Forms of Engagement?

Though younger age cohorts may be less motivated to vote or join a political party, some argue that this should not be taken as an indication that young people are less interested in civic ideals, causes, and engagement (Stolle and Hooghe, 2005). Political scientist Ronald Inglehart argues that young generations are different, because they grow up in relatively affluent economic circumstances, which shapes their values for their adult life (1997). He claims that the general rise of economic living standards during the socialization period in Western countries has caused citizens to develop more post-materialist values, which despise hierarchical organization and emphasize issues of self-fulfillment, rights, and equality for everyone, and focus on the environment. Young generations are increasingly post-materialist, and they should, therefore, reject the hierarchical organizations of political parties and the approach of traditional politics (ibid). Several scholars documented how young citizens have developed new and creative ways to participate in the political realm, and that some activities have been greatly overlooked. Attending rallies and demonstrations and signing petitions have become common, especially among young people today. Using these forms of participation, students and young citizens have been found to be interested particularly in broader community affairs, related to issues of justice and globalization (Mandle, 2000). As Judith Torney-Purta (2001: 285) stated:

> Behaviors that have traditionally been associated with adult citizenship, such as engaging in political discussion or joining a political party, are viewed by these young people as relatively unimportant. On the other hand, across countries, young people believe that the responsibilities of adult citizens include taking part in activities that promote human rights, protect the environment and benefit the community.

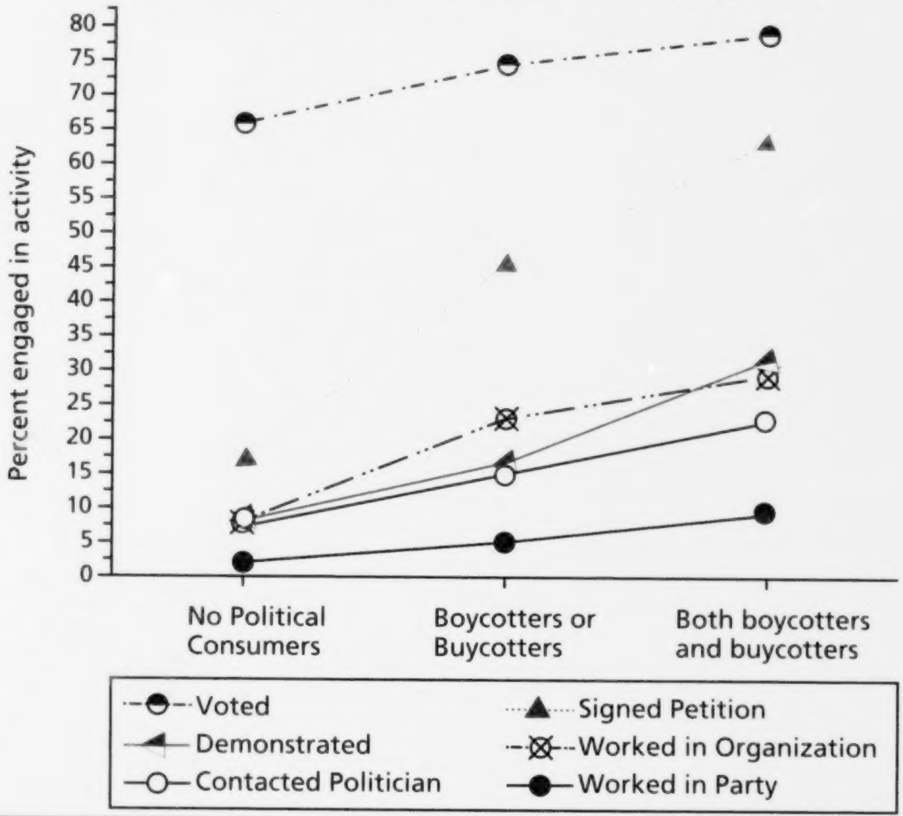
In sum, the responsibilities of conventional citizenship are lower on the priority list of youngsters than so-called social-movement-related activities.

Not only have young people developed new focuses and interests in societal issues that go beyond the local and neighbourly realm, their interests often extend beyond the direct address of the government as in the global nature of the student anti-globalization movement, the fair trade movement (Bullert, 2000), or the student sweatshop movements (Mandle, 2000). Youth also use new ways and new media for their political involvement. Internet-mediated activism (Bennett, 2003, 2004), political consumerism (Stolle et al., 2005), and culture jamming (Peretti and Micheletti, 2003) are only a few examples of this trend. Young people also tend to see a greater confluence between politics and everyday life. In effect, they view the personal as political and consider seemingly mundane daily routines as arenas for individualized political action, as in vegetarianism/veganism (Giddens, 1991; Bang and Sorensen, 1999). These types of activism challenge mainstream conceptions of citizenship and our view of what constitutes political participation; citizenship has become reflexive and involves a complex package of relationships, commitments, identities, involvements, and responsibilities to oneself, one's groups and networks, and the global community (Delanty, 2000).

The question, however, is whether these new forms of engagement truly substitute for the declining engagement in traditional political and social activities. Using the emerging form of engagement in political consumerism we test with the European Social Survey whether those engaged in new forms of civic engagement are also those who have left traditional politics. If this was the case, we could conclude that the decline of traditional engagement might not be as worrisome, as new ways of "civicness" are evolving in their place. Figure 7 shows conventional forms of politics (lines 1, 2 and 4 from bottom) and unconventional forms of participation (lines 3 and 5). This figure demonstrates that those engaging in political consumerism activities are those who are also otherwise most active throughout all forms of participation included in the European Social Survey, such as traditional activities. High-level political consumers vote more in elections, work more frequently in organizations and political parties, and contact more politicians. They are also more involved in signing petitions and participating in demonstrations than other groups. In contrast, the group of "no political consumers" lags behind on all forms of participation. This suggests that among young people there is a group that seems disaffected from all forms of participation, traditional as well

Figure 7

New Forms as Substitutes for the Loss in Traditional Engagement? Comparing Youth Non-Political and Political Consumers (aged 20-29)



Source: The figure shows percentages of political actions by levels of political consumerism in 21 European countries and Israel for the age group 20-29 year olds. Data source is the European Social Survey showing aggregated weighted statistics for the pooled data. See more in Stolle and Micheletti, 2004.

as new. This means political consumerism is, at best, an additional channel of political participation for people already engaged. It therefore is also unlikely to solve the issue of decline in political participation for those who are completely disengaged from politics. Similar results have been found with regard to protesting, Internet activism, and signing petitions (authors' calculations). In sum, new forms of civic engagement are on the rise, particularly among young generations. Governments should not lose track of these changing action repertoires of the young. In fact, since youth are particularly interested in life style politics, governments should be aware that new mobilization efforts for youth should engage them in a way that relates public issues to their private experiences. Yet, new forms of engagement do not fully explain the strong youth disenchantment with politics as there is a gap between those youth who are broadly engaged in a myriad of both new and traditional channels and those youth who are not engaged at all.

In sum, the factors behind the decline in youth engagement in society and politics are not yet fully understood. Whereas some authors highlight the importance of larger societal transformations caused by new technologies such as TV, changing life patterns, and socialization experiences in the families, these factors cannot fully explain why youth engage less in conventional ways. Others who are more sanguine about the status of youth engagement emphasize that youth engage in new and creative ways in our societies. However, new action repertoires are not practised by everyone and, therefore, do not fully bridge the growing gap between tuned-out and engaged youth.

Possible Consequences of Youth Trends in Canada

Any substantial decline in youth engagement may have important long-term consequences for two reasons. First, early youth engagement is sticky, meaning that youth who are not socialized into the habit of active democratic citizenship, might not learn it later on, changing our societies fundamentally through generational replacement. Second, social capital and citizen engagement are important resources at the community and country levels; a permanent decline might potentially affect Canada's political and economic resources. A number of studies demonstrate that voting at an early age has significant consequences later on in the life cycle. Whether or not one has voted in the first elections after becoming enfranchised seems to have a lasting effect on future electoral turnout (Plutzer, 2002; Franklin, 2004; Highton and Wolfinger, 2001). Green and Shachar (2000) developed the thesis that voting is mainly a matter of habit: once this habit has been ingrained, preferably at a young age, it takes little investment of time and attention to follow it. Similarly, once people understand that it is quite easy to stay home on election day, it is just as easy to continue this habit. For those who have been voting regularly, another trip to the polls is seen not as a costly investment of time and effort, but rather as a continuation of an already existing behavioural pattern (Blais, 2000).

Beyond voting, other forms of civic engagement, such as membership in voluntary associations or party memberships are also at the mercy of this habit effect (Jennings, 1987; Hooghe et al., 2004). Those active in youth organizations remain more involved once they have reached adulthood (Verba et al., 1995). In other words, a socialization perspective would suggest that if younger generations are less engaged and politically active, the consequences for their future participation in the democratic polity look even bleaker. Such evidence implies that the long-term prospects for civic engagement may be threatened in contemporary societies experiencing declines in youth engagement.

The research has shown very vividly that if societies are to prosper, citizens need physical and human capital, as well as social capital (Ostrom, 2001). The benefits of social capital are by now well established, both at the micro and at the macro levels. In the political sphere, generalized trust and other civic attitudes allow citizens to join forces in social and political groups, and enable them to come together in citizens' initiatives more easily. In the social sphere, social capital facilitates life in diverse societies and fosters acts of tolerance and acceptance of otherness. Children embedded in supporting social networks score higher on school attainment (Coleman and Hoffer, 1987; De Graaf et al., 2000), while some studies have also found a strong relation between mental and even physical health and network breadth (Putnam, 2000: 226-235; Rose, 2000). While these consequences for individuals certainly entail societal benefits, research has also shown a more direct link between aspects of social capital and large-scale outcomes, such as economic growth (Fukuyama, 1995; Knack and Keefer, 1997; Dasgupta and Serageldin, 2000), lower crime rates (Jacobs, 1961; Wilson, 1987), and more responsive government (Putnam, 1993). In short, societies with more dense networks and higher levels of citizen engagement and trust perform better overall and are better able to solve their collection action problems.

Finally, governments should be interested in the social capital and civic engagement of citizens for normative reasons as well. Imbalanced participation affects how different interests are represented to policy makers (Putnam, 2000). In Canada, young voters constitute a disproportionately large percentage of the total non-voters. If this means their interests are underrepresented in policy making then politics becomes further and further removed from young citizens. This process in itself might deepen the widening rift between different generations and their varying engagement in civic life.

Factors and Programs that Foster Youth Civic Engagement

The question for policy makers concerned with the state of youth civic engagement is how best to mobilize youth and maximize the benefits from their participation. Verba et al. (1995) and several other participation scholars identified three main factors that determine civic and political participation: resources, interest, and recruitment. Resources refer to economic resources, such as time and money that enable participation; interest refers to the political and civic stimulation and the sense of political efficacy that facilitates involvement; and recruitment refers to social networks that serve to mobilize citizens and promote participation.

This work suggests three broad strategies of policy and program development to promote civic participation. The first would be to ensure a more equitable distribution of resources, or to mitigate the impact of unequal access to resources by removing institutional, administrative, or socio-economic barriers to participation, such as residency requirements.

A second broad strategy focuses on youth engagement efforts and increasing political interest. Many programs have concentrated on developing civic education as a means of addressing apathy or a diminished sense of political efficacy, but some programs work better than others. The third strategy develops social networks that will help in recruiting youth into civic life and sustain their involvement even when they become adults. This section outlines strategies for achieving these civic engagement goals in different arenas of everyday experience of youth: homes, schools, communities, and workplaces.

The Home

Although there are many different paths to civic engagement, most scholars agree that these paths all begin in one place: the home. In addition to recognizing the importance of family socialization, home-based approaches to fostering youth engagement focus on providing resources and developing basic civic skills and political interest. To meet these goals, many successful programs promoted resilience in youth through supportive relationships with parents and other family members, helped parents or adult family members become civic role models for youth, and provided children with the capacity to reinforce their parents' engagement.

Building Social Attitudes and Support Networks for Youth

One approach to fostering youth engagement in the home focuses on promoting positive relationships within the family to develop both social attitudes and support networks that youth can draw on throughout their lives. After all, the first lessons in social behaviours and values (such as norms of trust and reciprocity) are learned in the home through relationships with parents and other family members. Generally, children who are provided with a positive and open home environment and who are socialized in a self-respecting and tolerant atmosphere are more likely to be co-operative and socially active (Uslaner, 2002). Steinberg (1996) showed that children with parents who talk to them about school and take an interest in their lives are more willing to engage in the community. Research also shows that the building of trust and co-operation in children is closely related to principles of consistency. Trust and co-operative attitudes in children flourish in a predictable and stable environment (Rempel et al., 1985; Rotenberg, 1980). In other words, the family atmosphere and parent-child interactions matter.

At the same time, one research area needs further support and future investment. Paradoxically, although this is one of the most complex and least understood ways of promoting youth engagement, it is an area where the amount of resources invested in youth can potentially provide the most far-reaching and long-term effects. Current research in Canada, the United States and Germany examines child-rearing techniques, the family atmosphere and parents' support for their children's networks in their potential to develop "civicness" in children and youth (Stolle, 2005). Policies resulting from this research might include government-offered tutorials for parents and special TV programs for parents on successful child-rearing techniques.

Providing Parents With the Resources to Become Civic Role Models for Youth

Many home-based approaches to fostering youth engagement focus on the importance of the family for providing youth with role models for civic engagement. Our earlier discussion has shown how parental engagement usually fosters the involvement of children. The MotherRead/FatherRead programs provide an example of a resource-based approach in the United States, which encourages parents to take books home and read to their children and discuss themes of the books. In addition to providing literacy resources to households with children, these programs promote discussion and debate in the home. This program has the advantage of learner-centred instruction, which tailors the curriculum to each group of program participants. For immigrant families, for example, there is the My United States program, which uses the MotherRead/FatherRead curriculum to teach families about US history and government, and to prepare them for citizenship and naturalization.

One other example that has become a trend in recent years is family volunteering, which is promoted and supported by many organizations in the United States and Canada, such as the Points of Light Foundation. Family volunteering is encouraging families to volunteer together. The goal is to get the whole family involved, which is seen as a way to encourage long-term volunteering (especially among busy parents who want to spend quality time with their kids) and boost volunteer rates/numbers. Family volunteering is seen as a way to foster civic engagement by providing youth with role models, promoting positive attitudes toward service, family cohesiveness, and communication. A survey of voluntary organizations in Canada found that 60 percent of respondents reported having family volunteers, and 16 percent offered special volunteering programs specifically geared toward families (Volunteer Canada, 2002).

Engaging Adolescents and Their Parents Together

Although many home-based approaches focus on transmitting civic skills, attitudes, and values from parents to children, fostering civic engagement in the home is not simply a parent-to-child process. The participation of children can also promote parent engagement. As a result, home-based approaches can be particularly effective when they enable parents and children to reinforce and promote each other's civic skills and attitudes.

One example of such a program is Kids Voting USA, which uses a multi-pronged approach to teach students about democracy (McDevitt and Kiousis, 2004). The curriculum promotes voting and political engagement, which is extended to the community in a service learning component and a parallel student election held on Election Day. Youth are engaged in the political process on many levels, culminating in youth participation in national and local elections.

Kids Voting USA can promote youth engagement in politics: research conducted in 1996 in Kansas showed a strong correlation between participation in Kids Voting USA and registration and voting as a first-time voter. In addition, McDevitt and Chaffee also found that Kids Voting USA increased turnout for parents whose children were participating in the program. This suggests the possibility of a "trickle-up" effect associated with promoting engagement: not only do parents serve as civic role models for their children, but it seems that children can also set a civic example for their parents as well.

Another program fosters family relationships with schools and communities. Families and Schools Together Canada (F&ST) is a set of programs at different levels of child development that brings families together to participate in activities meant to enhance family relationships and support communities. This approach focuses on the home by creating linkages among families, schools, and communities. In surveys conducted by F&ST, 86 percent of parent participants reported making new friends through the program, and 91 percent reported that the program encouraged them to become more involved with the school community (F&ST Canada, 2004).

At School

As the "only institutions with the capacity and mandate to reach virtually every young person in the country," schools tend to take the lead in establishing programs to foster youth engagement (Carnegie Corporation and CIRCLE, 2002). In earlier socialization research, the effect of civic education programs has been mixed. This was mostly due to the top-down character of civic education programs in which students were asked to learn facts about their political systems. However, recent research has contributed to a new innovative and interactive approach that can help develop political knowledge and civic skills in youth. In meeting these goals, two strategies have been particularly successful: encouraging discussions in classrooms and integrating civic skills, such as letter writing or debating, into the curriculum; and establishing youth-led service-learning or volunteering programs.

Encourage Discussions in Classrooms and Integrate Civic Skills into Curriculum

According to Niemi and Junn (1998), learning about government and citizenship merely by memorizing facts is not as effective as participatory or interactive programs. Students who report that their teachers encourage open discussions on politics and national issues tend to score higher on civic engagement scales than other students (Keeter et al., 2002: 32; see also Torney-Purta, 2001). Classroom discussions can also increase the effectiveness of other programs aimed at fostering youth engagement. Andolina et al. (2003) found that encouraging student volunteers to discuss their experiences in class makes them twice as likely to continue volunteering later in life. Sixty-four percent of student volunteers who discussed their service work in class continued to volunteer regularly, as compared to only 32 percent of student volunteers who did not have the opportunity to discuss their service work in class (Andolina et al., 2003).

Schools can also foster engagement by encouraging the development of specific civic skills, through hands-on activities. However, the emphasis on different skills varies: 80 percent of high school students have been required to give a speech or oral report, but only 51 percent have taken part in a debate (Andolina et al., 2003). According to Andolina et al. (2003: 278), "students who have been taught these skills, especially letter writing and debating, are much more likely than those lacking such education to be involved in a range of participatory acts inside and outside the school environment, even when other factors are taken into account."

An example of a successful civic education program is the national Youth Leadership Initiative (YLI) in the United States,[9] which is "designed to involve students in the American electoral and policymaking process and to foster greater community awareness and participation" (Stroupe and Sabato, 2004).[10]

This program combines in-class and electronic sessions for students to learn about local politics and civic duty. Strengths of the program include flexibility to tailor programs to fit local interests, ability to foster discussion and debate, and use of hands-on learning. The focus on local politics encourages students to become involved in issues that directly affect them. For example, students study how campaign advertisements influence people by selecting a local advertisement, analyzing the possible meanings – both intentional and unintentional – and discussing the reasons why certain advertisements are targeted to particular groups of people. The program also fosters discussions and debates among students. Students study and discuss the meanings behind Norman Rockwell paintings about civil and women's rights, and read and discuss Locke's theories on universal human rights. The program also emphasizes participation to teach students about politics. For example, to learn about elections and the differences between political party ideologies, students participate in an on-line "e-campaign" where they can run in a local gubernatorial or presidential race. During this simulation, the students get hands-on experience with local political issues, participating in debates and, ultimately, going through the election itself.

An example of a successful program in Canada is Student Vote 2004, which partnered with Elections Canada and the Department of Canadian Heritage to hold parallel federal elections among youth under the voting age in schools to raise civic awareness. The non-partisan program is intended to foster a "habit of electoral and community participation among students" (Student Vote, 2004). Over a quarter million students participated in this initiative, from more than 1,100 schools throughout the country (Canada NewsWire, 2004). Student Vote 2004 conducted surveys in addition to administering the parallel election. Before May 27, 2,915 students participated in a pre-election survey that showed 68 percent would vote if the election were held that day and 34 percent kept informed about issues, government, and politics. In addition, students participating in the pre-election survey could name an average of four political parties. After the Student Vote in their school, a post-election survey with 1,401 student respondents indicated that 87 percent would vote if the election were held that day and 53 percent kept informed of issues, government, and politics. Students in the post-election survey were also able to name an average of five political parties. This partnership illustrates ways to mobilize non-governmental organizations to address the problem of non-voting youth.

Establish Youth-Led Volunteering Programs

The practice of service learning is widespread in the United States and Canada. In the United States, a recent survey by the National Center for Education Statistics showed that 83 percent of high schools offered community service opportunities in their curriculum, compared with only 27 percent in 1984 (Westheimer and Kahne, 2004: 2). It is widely believed that the volunteering experiences in service learning contribute to the development of a civic identity in youth (Youniss et al., 2002). The task here is to create programs that leave a lasting impact on young citizens. In particular, school-based programs need to address the fact that volunteering rates diminish after high school. Unfortunately, programs can vary widely both in goals and in how they are implemented, giving rise to mixed results. Service learning tends to be most successful when two broad goals are kept in mind: using student-led volunteering to foster civic skills, and making the links between individual actions and broader governmental and societal outcomes.

One example of student-led volunteering is the Peace Corps Partnership Project, which uses several strategies for encouraging youth engagement through service learning. First, the program emphasizes student ownership of projects. Students are involved at every step of the process, from evaluating needs, raising funds, and implementing solutions. Jim Miller, a teacher at Corcoran High School, described the process of choosing a project as "a tremendous learning experience, as students compare and discuss the various merits of the projects, how much money is to be raised, and the relative needs among the projects" (Miller, 2005). Second, the program is integrated into the curriculum. Students exchange letters, drawings, and photographs with Peace Corps volunteers, which are used as hands-on learning tools in the classroom. Third, the program reinforces membership in other school clubs and activities. Peace Corps Partnership programs within the school are co-ordinated by student members of the school's International Relations Club. Club members are also encouraged to present workshops about the program and their current fund-raising projects. Fourth, participation in the project encourages students to get involved in their communities. As part of their involvement, high school students pair up with and teach younger students at the neighbouring elementary school. In addition to learning about the cultures of the different places the Peace Corps is involved with, the younger students are encouraged to participate in the fund-raising programs.

Service learning is also more successful when it explicitly establishes the link between citizen action, government policies, and socio-political outcomes (Westheimer and Kahne, 2004). Students may be serving food in soup kitchens, for example, but they aren't necessarily making the link from their individual role to government policies that address the problem of poverty from an institutional standpoint. Yet several successful examples of service learning programs make this link between individual action and policy outcomes. One group studied the causes of domestic violence and held workshops for other high school students to educate them about domestic violence; another group worked with a community to halt the construction of a hazardous waste-disposal plant. According to Westheimer and Kahne (2000: 3), such programs "use the power of experiences helping others to teach students to address complex social problems and their causes."

Communities and Social Networks

For youth making the transition from childhood to young adulthood, communities are particularly relevant for developing civic skills and attitudes. Young people spend lots of time in their social networks, and they offer a variety of avenues for mobilizing youngsters into civic attitudes and behaviours. There is much research on the effect of voluntary associations for adults, which shows that members of organizations and associations exhibit more democratic and civic attitudes as well as more active forms of political participation than non-members. Almond and Verba (1963) found that members of associations are more politically active, more informed about politics, more sanguine about their ability to affect political life, and more supportive of democratic norms (see also Billiet and Cambré, 1996; Hanks and Eckland, 1978; Olsen, 1972; Verba and Nie, 1972). Others have noticed that the number and type of associations to which people belong, and the extent of their activity within the organization, are related to political activity and involvement (Rogers et al., 1975). In later research, Verba and his colleagues found that members of voluntary associations learn self-respect, group identity, and public skills (Verba et al., 1995; see also Dekker et al., 1997; Moyser and Parry, 1997).

To these findings, the social capital school adds the insight that membership in associations should also facilitate the learning of co-operative attitudes and behaviour, including reciprocity. In particular, membership in voluntary associations should increase face-to-face interactions between people and create a setting for the development of trust. This in-group trust can be used to achieve group purposes more efficiently and more easily. Furthermore, via mechanisms that are not yet clearly understood, the development of interpersonal trust and the co-operative experiences between members tends to be generalized to the society as a whole (see also Boix and Posner, 1996). In this way, the operation of voluntary groups and associations contributes to the building of a society in which co-operation between all people for all sorts of purposes – not just within the groups themselves – is facilitated. (For empirical evidence regarding this relationship, see Almond and Verba, 1963; Brehm and Rahn, 1997; Hooghe and Stolle, 2003; Stolle and Rochon, 1998, 1999).[11]

Most recently, social capital research has emphasized that not all associations are alike (Putnam, 2000; Stolle and Rochon, 1998) and that we should make distinctions between various types of groups. For example, it has been argued that the composition of the groups matter for positive socialization results. Groups constituted by a wide variety of people from various (ethnic, racial, socio-economic) backgrounds are assumed to have more beneficial effects on the learning of tolerance and civic attitudes, such as generalized trust (Mutz, 2002; Stolle, 2001). Diversity in groups with positive co-operation experiences might be the most useful tool in fostering and maintaining social capital, civic orientations, and an interest in society and politics more broadly.

Socialization research has shown that associational experiences are even more powerful and lasting for young citizens. For example, participation in extracurricular activities is related to a host of positive outcomes for youth.[12] Children and youth who participated generally had stronger academic skills, higher self-esteem, and better health than those who did not participate (Statistics Canada, 2001). Longitudinal studies like the Jennings and Niemi (1981) panel survey suggest that participation at a young age has lasting effects on subsequent political attitudes and behaviours. In an analysis of the Canadian National Longitudinal Study of Children and Youth (NLSCY), Harell and Stolle (2005) found that youth engagement in community groups and other types of clubs is one of the most important predictors of club membership, volunteering and willingness to take on special responsibilities in an organization four years later. Moreover, dropping out of these club activities has negative effects.

Social groups provide networks, especially at the local level, that can be used for various mobilization efforts later on in life (Stolle and Hooghe, 2004). According to Keeter et al. (2002), one in five volunteers aged 15 to 24 (born after 1976) reported getting involved because "someone else put us together," compared to 14 percent of those born between 1964 and 1976, 6 percent of those born between 1946 and 1964, and 11 percent of those born before 1946. In sum, social networks and groups are important particularly for youth, because they shape attitudes, co-operative behaviours, and provide networks for mobilization.

Unfortunately, the study of adolescents' social environments and their involvement in various forms of social interaction – although one of the most promising avenues for socialization research – is one of the most understudied areas. It is interesting to observe that socialization studies remain largely focused on the realm of education. Only recently have we seen a move to integrate more aspects of the actual interactions in school, such as classroom atmosphere and the opportunity to talk freely in class, into such research designs. Stolle, Gauthier and Harell are developing a new longitudinal study with 16 to 17 year olds in Quebec and Ontario, in which they focus specifically on the character of the social networks in which young citizens are embedded (2005). They examine how the diversity and intensity of the networks contributes to the development of civic attitudes and behaviours.

Relying here on the existing, although incomplete, research on the effects of youth networks, we highlight the following strategies from which communities would benefit: actively recruiting youth to participate in and promoting networks, and fostering youth leadership in organizations.

Promoting Outreach Through Networks

Programs aimed at promoting youth engagement are more likely to have lasting effects if they are able to foster and develop the networks created by their participants even after they are no longer participating. After all, participation is generally high among young children: 87 percent of Canadian children aged 4 to 15 participated in organized extra-curricular activities (National Longitudinal Survey on Children and Youth, 1998/1999). Yet the role for a network-based approach to social capital must be to maintain the benefits of this early engagement in extra-curricular activities throughout adolescence and into adulthood by taking advantage of the social networks created by organizations and clubs to mobilize and facilitate engagement later in life. Usually, engagement in such social activities is supported somewhat during the school period, but then drops off sharply.

It is also worth mentioning here that Swedish municipal governments offer financial support to youth and sport-related organizations. These financial resources are used for the organizational infrastructure, member meetings, and events. Interested youth can get together and apply for financial resources in their communities. Since Sweden has fewer problems with the decline of youth engagement, such strategies might be worth consideration.

Not only peer networks are important; adolescent-adult contacts add a useful dimension to fostering civic spirit. Our example here results again from the Swedish context, where we can find community networks designed to establish useful contact between adults and adolescents. The idea is that parents form loose neighbourhood groups which go on night walks to be in touch with the kids in their communities (Farsor and Morsor, nd). A non-profit umbrella organization called Fathers and Mothers in the City provides the necessary infrastructure for interested parents and adults to participate. Whereas some have criticized such programs as a form of social control, interviews have revealed that the resulting contacts between adults and youth have been extremely useful in preventing youth-related crime, and in fostering youth-adult activities as well as further societal engagement in communities.

In Canada, programs to promote long-term engagement have benefited from a multi-faceted approach to creating and sustaining social networks for youth. One example is the Aboriginal Youth Research program of the Centre of Excellence for Youth Engagement (CEYE), which promotes youth health outcomes by building community-wide networks of knowledge inquiry and exchange (CEYE, 2002). The Centre's numerous partnerships with organizations and communities allow it to promote the continued engagement of youth by encouraging involvement in other related youth programs and conferences. For example, as part of a community-based effort to promote engagement among Aboriginal youth, the CEYE encouraged participants to present their work to nationwide conferences for Aboriginal youth. The Centre also employed youth from the community to assist in research development, strengthening the ties between the CEYE and the community. The linkages between youth, researchers, schools, government, and the community promote skill building and knowledge sharing even after the formal program ends.

Fostering Youth Leadership and Participation Within Organizations

Promoting youth engagement in the community is often as simple as offering young people a seat at the table: youth-oriented foundations and non-profit organizations have recognized the value of establishing youth advisory boards. These organizations benefit from youth input to improve the effectiveness of their programs. In addition, the experience of participating in youth advisory boards fosters community values in youth, and allows them to develop leadership and civic skills.

In Canada, the CEYE has taken the lead in promoting youth participation within organizations. It brings together the research on building effective programs for youth engagement, and uses these resources to help improve organizations and programs in their network. In promoting youth participation and youth leadership within organizations, the CEYE also practises what it preaches: in 2002 there were 76 youth trained to carry out CEYE research (CEYE, 2002). Youth are also involved in all aspects of the CEYE's activities. In addition to being the focus of the CEYE's programs, young people also serve as program co-ordinators, advisors and evaluators, researchers, and conference participants.

Worldwide, youth advisory groups are giving young people a voice in government policy at local, national, and international levels. One example, Voces Nuevas in Peru, specifically allows youth representatives to join discussions about the government's poverty reduction programs. Another model, called the co-management approach by the Advisory Council on Youth in the European Union, makes youth equal partners in the formulation of regional policies. Similar programs of national youth councils in many other developing countries have evolved with representatives from the established networks of scouts, young politicians, and youth in media, drama, and sports, etc. Because many of these youth networks and councils are often invited to participate in global forums, in addition to promoting engagement among their youth participants, they have also become significant contributors to government policy decision making.

Workplaces

Unfortunately, the workplace has been largely ignored by efforts and programs to encourage youth engagement, which is reflected by a similar omission in the literature on adult workplaces (see Mutz and Mondak, 1998; an exception in Brady et al., 1995). The workplace, however, plays an important role in young people's lives: workplaces constitute a social environment for building networks and developing skills and attitudes. The problem is that most civic outreach programs focus on the school population, excluding young adults who drop out of schools or who complete their education early. It is, therefore, no wonder that we find particular strong engagement gaps between those youth who continue with their education and youth who have started to work disproportionately early. To encourage youth engagement in the workplace, several strategies stand out: ease the school-to-work transition through outreach and mentoring, and reward and recognize youth participation.

Outreach and Mentoring

Traditionally, the paths youth could take from school to work were straightforward and simple: from high school to work, or the option of post-secondary education in between. In recent decades, however, this passage has become increasingly complicated and non-linear, because of a number of factors, such as the difficulties of finding employment, the rise of non-traditional jobs, and increased student debt (Franke, 1998). Youth today can find themselves repeatedly going back and forth from school to work or combining work and school. In this context, mentoring and outreach programs ease the school-to-work transition.

Examples of such initiatives could include having youth choose adults in their field of interest to "shadow" adult activities including in the civic sphere or establishing internship programs that allow youth to get hands-on experience (as opposed to doing administrative or clerical tasks).

Rewarding Youth Participation

One effective way that workplaces can encourage youth engagement is to acknowledge the skills youth can develop through involvement in organizations and volunteering as an important part of their work experience. This allows youth to benefit from their contributions to community and gives companies the advantage of hiring youth with specific skill sets, such as leadership or hands-on experience with working as part of a team.

Millennium Volunteers (MV) in the United Kingdom allows youth between the ages of 16 and 24 to gain recognition for their achievements in service. The program evaluates and tracks youth service by issuing awards for 100 and 200 hours of community service. According to the program, over 40,000 program participants have received awards for 200 hours of service. Through partnerships with the private sector, MV promotes awareness of the value of skills acquired through volunteering. For employers, the program provides a standard for identifying the achievements of youth volunteers, and the MV distinction has become widely recognized and valued among employers. The MV program has two positive outcomes for youth: promoting youth personal development through civic engagement and easing the school-to-work transition by connecting employers with youth.

The Potential for Future Policy and Program Development

In contemplating future policy and program development to foster youth civic engagement, there are two main strategies for government action: focus efforts on the most beneficial forms of political and civic engagement, and target programs to disengaged youth.

Focus Efforts on the Most Beneficial Forms of Engagement

While youth engagement is beneficial for youth themselves, the community, democracy, and the economy, the impacts can vary. Generally, different forms of engagement and participation are not equally desirable. As Tossutti (2004: 18) emphasized in her study, there are significant "qualitative differences between different types of involvements and the very different political outcomes that can result." Similarly, Jennings (1987) noted that not all forms of political activity are equal in terms of fostering civic attitudes and political engagement.[15] As a result, government should concentrate on promoting forms of engagement that result in payoffs for the larger society and encourage individuals to reinvest the returns of participation for their own benefit. Government policies for promoting beneficial forms of engagement include supporting programs that encourage youth to work toward common goals and diverse youth networks, and providing work-related incentives for youth engagement, and financial and infrastructural support for youth community groups.

Support Programs that Encourage Diverse Networks and Co-operation Toward a Common Goal

In general, extra-curricular activities and the participation in social groups are important for youth participation, because they provide a context for youth to engage with one another and develop civic skills, such as teamwork. At the same time, these positive outcomes for engagement increase when activities promote youth co-operative efforts to ward a common goal. In addition, recent research has found that diverse networks might be better for developing civic attitudes and tolerance than groups that bring together people from similar backgrounds. Positive co-operation experiences in diverse groups develop norms of generalized reciprocity, tolerance and, most likely, generalized trust, and mobilize youth into thinking differently about their society (Rogers et al., 1975; Hanks, 1981; Glanville, 1999; Conway and Damico, 2001; Mutz, 2002).

Governments can focus on providing more opportunities for extra-curricular activities and youth groups, especially those that encourage youth to co-operate toward common goals. Geographic exchange programs and youth partnerships (such as Big Brother, Big Sister) that bring diverse youth together for collective experiences might be particularly fruitful here.

Governments can also explore ways to link the notion of achieving common civic goals, through less civic-oriented activities that are more popular among youth, such as art, music, sports, and other similar activities. Sport participation is a particularly promising example for Canada, because young people participate in sports at higher rates than any other age group. According to Sport Canada (1998), among 15 to 18 year olds, 80 percent of males and 64 percent of females participated regularly in sports activities. The networks created by widespread youth participation in sports can be mobilized by government toward youth civic engagement efforts. For example, the government can encourage youth soccer teams to have civic-oriented goals, through activities, such as fund-raising drives to collect soccer equipment to donate. Sports are also an area where the government can encourage youth to help each other through youth-led participation. Youth soccer players on organized teams can help teach and coach special soccer clinics to promote participation among disadvantaged youth.

One example of a program in Canada that uses sports to achieve civic engagement goals is the Legacy program associated with the 2002 North American Indigenous Games. This program uses the context of the Games to promote Aboriginal youth engagement and empowerment, through sport-related activities. Aboriginal youth volunteer to construct traditional Red River carts to take part in a ceremony for the games, under the guidance of a Metis elder.

Providing Work-Related Incentives for Youth Engagement

One of the most promising roles for government in encouraging youth engagement is to provide incentives for youth engagement through work. The advantages governments have in influencing the school-to-work transition can be mobilized specifically to promote youth engagement by linking youth services to broader employment opportunities. Governments can provide incentives for youth engagement in several ways, such as educating and forming partnerships with businesses, or establishing programs to give priority to hiring youth with service experience for government positions.

Governments have the resources to create and publicize job databases for youth, and fund internship programs and summer job initiatives. Canada's Youth Employment Strategy is an example of a multi-faceted approach to promoting youth in the work force. Programs in the Youth Employment Strategy include Young Canada Works (YCW), a joint initiative of the Department of Canadian Heritage and Parks Canada, which provides grants, in the form of wage subsidies for summer jobs and internships. The two internship programs, Building Careers in Heritage and Building Careers in English and French, allow young Canadians to develop valuable work skills and experience, while learning about and promoting Canadian heritage.

Support to Youth Community Groups

A more costly alternative for governments is to support youth groups with financial help and aid in infrastructure. Local governments might be able to distribute financial resources to youth groups, and might support such groups by providing meeting space in (youth) community centres. The provision of space that lends itself to social interactions is an important issue for fostering social networks in communities (Jacobs, 1961). Since space for youth groups would allow for better partnerships between youth, the parents in the community and other adults, it might not only help in shaping youth networks, but it might also help to prevent delinquent behaviour.

Target Efforts to Specific (Disengaged) Groups

Since our analysis has found that certain groups of youth are more disaffected than others with the trend indicating a widening gap between the participants and the bystanders, government policies can also be designed to target specific disengaged groups within the youth population. In particular, governments can recruit minority youth, such as Aboriginal and immigrant youth, and re-engage older youth, especially those in the work force.

Minorities

For government, the integration of minority youth who are disproportionately disengaged in political and public affairs is a central issue. One promising avenue for encouraging participation among youth members of disadvantaged groups is through government funding and promotion of what are considered to be best practice programs. These programs continually empower youth to partake in decisions that affect them directly. Good programs allow youth full access to knowledge and information about policy issues, and about conditions in the economy that determine their employment and livelihoods. These programs also provide the venues for youth to voice their concerns about government programs and policies. Last, a program is a best practice when it makes governments more accountable for their actions, allowing youth to assist in monitoring and evaluating public programs.

One example of a best practice program in Canada is the Department of Canadian Heritage Urban Multipurpose Aboriginal Youth Centres (UMAYC). The centrepiece of UMAYC is the creation of a network of youth centres that provides the Government of Canada with a starting point for creating programs for Aboriginal youth. According to Canadian Heritage, these centres will provide "Aboriginal community-based, culturally relevant and supportive projects, programs, services and counselling to urban Aboriginal youth" (UMAYC, 2005). The UMAYC programs fit the best practice criteria, because of their emphasis on a multi-dimensional and multi-faceted approach to empowering Aboriginal youth. Another example is Elections Canada's Aboriginal Elder and Youth Program (AEYP). While aimed at increasing voter turnout among Aboriginal voters in general, it fosters civic skills and attitudes among youth by engaging them in assisting, interpreting for, and providing information to fellow Aboriginal electors. The Program also provides youth with an opportunity to monitor and evaluate the government.

In addition to promoting best practice programs, it is important for policy makers to deal with the problems associated with minority status, but also to address the issues specific to minority youth. This task is especially difficult, because of the wide range of experiences and cultures within the demographic group. For example, immigrant youth from different countries can face different linguistic or cultural barriers to civic engagement. At the same time, culture can also play a role in facilitating integration. A cultural emphasis on family and educational achievement, for example, can actually help the integration of youth into society (Anisef and Kilbride, 2000). Therefore, programs to meet the needs of immigrant youth are most effective when they recognize and build on existing cultural traditions and family structures.

Similarly, addressing the needs of Aboriginal youth is important for developing successful programs. In Australia, for example, youth volunteering was identified as a particularly relevant issue, as 56 percent of indigenous volunteers were under 34 years of age, compared to 27 percent of volunteers in the general population of Australia (Kerr et al., 2001).

To foster youth volunteering, the Australian government funded environmental programs, such as the Green Corps, for young people aged 17 to 20. Overall, five percent of Green Corps participants identified themselves as indigenous, a comparatively large percentage, because indigenous youth are only 2.97 percent of the overall population of 17 to 20 year olds (Green Corps, nd). Furthermore, more recent projects have shown participation rates of indigenous youth to be as high as 9 percent. According to the Green Corps, its success in encouraging indigenous youth to participate in its programs stems from an emphasis on indigenous history and land use of the area. The Green Corps also forms partnerships with local indigenous people and organizations for their projects.

Reducing the Participation Gap

One of the most troubling trends in Canada is the widening gap in participation between the most and least educated youth. In the last decade, voter turnout "has fallen over 30 points among those with less than a high school education and 15 points or more among those who have completed high school and/or some college. Meanwhile, turnout has held steady among young university graduates" (Gidengil et al., 2003a). Consequently, pure university-based efforts for voter registration, may be reinforcing this gap in turnout by encouraging those youth most likely to vote anyway. Government efforts need to be directed at reducing the participation gap between the youth who are tuned out and those who remain active.

One successful Australian program ties provisional voter registration lists with secondary school-based registration drives. Australia has special agreements with high schools for funding tied to the number of students registered on the list of electors (Archer, 2003). Provisional registration is important, because many high school students are below voting age, and provisional registration allows registration efforts to begin in high schools instead of college or university. This has the advantage of being able to reach a broader segment of youth.

Volunteering is another area where inequalities in participation among youth matter for the design of government programs. Those 15 to 19 years old volunteer at a higher rate and contribute more time to volunteering than the average for all age groups. In 2000, 37 percent of 15 to 19 year olds volunteered, contributing an average of 136 hours, compared to only 22 percent of 20 to 24 year olds, contributing an average of 121 hours (D-Code, 2003). In other words, programs need to focus on creating skills and capacities, and foster the social networks that will enable youth to continue volunteering. Simply requiring students to volunteer only boosts the numbers of student volunteers in high schools; promoting long-term engagement is only achieved when volunteering is linked to broader societal issues and public policies. In addition, government efforts to increase volunteering among youth should also focus on youth aged 20 to 25. Examples include promoting company-sponsored initiatives and volunteering at the undergraduate and postgraduate levels.

Finally, we propose that governments support research particularly in the area of how to mobilize disadvantaged youth, particularly marginalized youth without employment and low levels of education; immigrant youth, and Aboriginal youth. How can society reach and mobilize such youth? Which themes and styles of participation get them involved? How can the importance of the maintenance of cultural heritage of Aboriginal and immigrant youth be linked to mobilization in the wider society? How can diverse ties between majority and minority youth be established in natural ways? How can the lack of resources for some youth be overcome to bridge the participation divide? The most promising avenue here is to undertake quasi-experimental research with disadvantaged youth, in which different mobilization strategies are tested in controlled settings.

Conclusion

This report has examined the status of youth civic engagement in Canada. We found that Canadian youth are more disengaged than older age groups, particularly in voting, party membership, and political knowledge, and they are less involved in traditional political activities than earlier generations at the same age. We should note that young citizens have found many more expressions and action repertoires to communicate their political and societal views, such as political consumerism, protest and life style politics; however, this development – although important – does not substitute for the loss in traditional forms of participation. The trend of youth disengagement is visible in several western democracies, particularly in the United States. Besides a general decline in overall "civicness" in the population as a whole and in the young generation, we observed a remarkable process, which is the widening gap between marginalized youth with fewer resources and those young people who go to college and receive higher levels of education. If this trend continues, our democratic systems will become less and less representative of all the diverse opinions and experiences of the Canadian population. Not all the causes of these societal trends are well understood. Our report has therefore attempted to focus on those factors that are beneficial for fostering youth engagement in society and politics. Besides the role of socio-economic resources that are looming, we have highlighted the role of social networks and groups, in which young citizens learn civic skills, experience co-operation with others, learn trust and reciprocity, and become mobilized into further action. Social networks are particularly useful when they are composed of diverse individuals who bring different views and experiences to the group life. In addition to networks, we have discussed here the role of civic educational programs that should include hands-on experiences and actual problem solving in the communities in which youth live. Finally, governments' attempts to foster youth engagement should also integrate the findings that youth practise a variety of new action repertoires that are driven by life-style politics, embedded in horizontal (as opposed to vertical) networks, motivated by private concerns. In addition, if societal and political issues relate more directly to the experiences of adolescents, youth mobilization should be more successful.

Notes

1 Question wording may have affected results. Respondents were asked if they had ever been a member of a political party, so the higher rates of participation among older respondents can be expected.

2 See Soroka et al. (forthcoming). See more on the ESC survey on <http://policyresearch.gc.ca/doclib/OECD_RichardJohnston_E.pdf>.

3 Several articles and books confirm these insights.

4 A study cited by Elections Canada of Aboriginal band elections in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick found that turnout in 1991 and 1992 ranged from 88 to 95 percent.

5 See, for example, Mata et al., (2000); Kerr et al., (2001).

6 Several reasons account for this discrepancy. There is a good discussion in Niemi and Junn (1998). Other factors are discussed in the remainder of this section.

7 Also mentioned in D-Code Social Vision Report.

8 One issue here is that those youth who seem most mobile as they receive more education and training are also the most active in civic life. As discussed earlier, the most problematic cases of youth disengagement are youth who are left out of the economic and education processes.

9 The YLI is a particularly useful model for future programs, because its effects on youth engagement have been rigorously assessed in several quasi-experimental studies. In one such study, Stroupe and Sabato (2004) found that YLI programs have a substantial and positive effect on students' levels of political knowledge, and that these effects hold even when other factors were considered. Students involved in the YLI program performed better than non-YLI students when answering 17 political knowledge questions. The mock election component of the YLI program, in particular, was found to be effective. According to Stroupe and Sabato, "the more exposure students have to the political participation exercises involved in the mock election aspects of the YLI program, the more likely they were to show increased positive outcomes" (7). Students who participated in the mock election were more likely to agree with statements that reflected political efficacy (an average of 2.20 items out of 5 on the index) compared to students whose classes did not have this program (an average of 2.06). In terms of political knowledge, mock election participants scored an average of 11.15 out of 17 questions, compared to only 9.87 for students whose classes did not participate in the program.

10 In this study, individual civics classrooms randomly sampled for inclusion in treatment groups were chosen from schools with at least one teacher who planned to use the YLI resources. Participating teachers were instructed to administer the survey to their earliest class of the day, to ensure random distribution at the respondent level. The control (non-treatment) groups in the study were randomly selected among schools registered with the National Council for Social Studies and from a random selection of schools generated from a national list provided by MDR Market Data Retrieval.

11 Although association members consistently exhibit more civic attitudes and behaviours than non-members, it has not been shown that the experience within the association per se leads to these outcomes or whether more trusting and more civically oriented citizens self-select into associations more disproportionately.

12 Although the findings reported by Statistics Canada demonstrate a relationship between participation in extra-curricular activities and positive outcomes for youth and children, there is not enough evidence to suggest a causal relationship. More analysis is necessary to determine whether these outcomes are caused by participation, or whether the correlation between participation and positive outcomes is indicative of another underlying cause.

13 He found that "the impact of military service on political participation and political attitudes was much more limited than was that for protest behaviour" (Jennings, 2000: 8).

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Commentary on "Youth Civic Engagement in Canada: Implications for Public Policy"

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Young people occupy an extremely important place in our society, and I would like to take this opportunity to share some thoughts with you on this subject.

First of all, it is important to know where young people fit in, from both a demographic and socio-economic standpoint. The 15-to-25 age group accounts for four million people in Canada. This is also the most educated generation that the country has ever seen. Very much in tune with global issues, it is a generation that makes abundant use of new technologies as an integral part of their civic engagement.

From an economic standpoint, there is no denying that these young people represent an asset that our country sorely needs in order to deal with an ageing population and the rapid transition to a knowledge-based economy. From a social standpoint, Canadian youth are even more open and innovative than their parents were before them: whether the issue is multiculturalism and respect for minority groups, command of the official languages or awareness of the challenges posed by globalization, more than ever our young people are expressing their desire to participate in the building of our society.

This raises a fundamental question: are our country, society and institutions fully benefiting from our young people's rich potential and creativity? Certain phenomena seem to indicate that a malaise has set in and that young Canadians are becoming very disengaged from their institutions.

It is hard to pinpoint the reasons for this declining participation. Several theories have been advanced, but with academic research in this field still at a relatively early stage, too few empirical studies have been carried out for us to be able to form precise conclusions. The general conclusions of this study by Stolle and Cruz certainly represent a step in the right direction in order to better understand this disengagement or malaise. Our young people are less engaged than older Canadians, and are participating less than their parents did at the same age, which seems to confirm a downward trend that can only be reversed if we make a sustained effort.

This research paper also informs us that when it comes to modes of civic and political expression, young Canadians are employing a greater variety, including participation in public demonstrations and the expression of socio-political choices through consumption; contrary to what many believe, however, these new forms of participation do not seem to constitute an alternative to such traditional modes of participation as the ballot box. Which leads us to ponder the following: there is a significant gap in terms of public participation between more educated and financially well-off young people and more marginalized and less educated young people – hence the importance for all the actors concerned to make a real effort to reach these categories of young people.

Governments certainly have an important role to play in reaching out to marginalized youth. Decision-makers in the public sector must put in place innovative programs to enable youth to make a difference at the local level and give them a source of motivation to reduce social inequities. But government action is only part of the answer; each of us shares the responsibility to encourage young people to take an interest in the future of their communities and of their country. As parents, we can make our children more aware of the benefits of cooperation and participation in building an even better nation for generations to come. Community groups, political parties and governments must make room for marginalized youth so that they can express themselves in existing institutions and change things. After all, it's the little things that change the world. All that young people are asking us is to believe in this, stand with them and support them in their efforts to realize their full potential.

Every week I meet young people who are active in their community and making a difference for their fellow citizens. It is important to avoid falling into the prejudice trap; too often, youth are told that they are too individualistic or irresponsible, or people try to rein in their creativity by asking them to be something they're not. We often forget that it is thanks to young people that we are able to challenge our beliefs, evolve and become better human beings. Every year, thousands of young Canadians distinguish themselves by their community involvement or creative ingenuity. It would truly be a shame if our society and institutions could not benefit from their immense talent and creativity.

SOCIAL CAPITAL AND COMMUNITY CRIME PREVENTION PROGRAMS

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The relationship between social capital and community crime prevention programs is both direct and complex. To date, exploration of this relationship has been somewhat limited. Some American research, for example, has demonstrated a strong empirical connection between community policing strategies, based partly on increasing social capital, and reductions in crime and fear of crime (Zhoa et al., 2002). Yet, unpacking the specific nature of the relationship between community crime prevention and social capital is complicated, both theoretically and empirically. Part of the complexity occurs because of reciprocal effects. In other words, crime prevention programs may increase social capital, while the effects of social capital increase the positive impact of crime prevention programs (Sampson and Raudenbush, 1999). In addition, several multi-level variables are very important in explaining the relationship between social capital and crime prevention, such as provincial and federal laws, provincial, federal, and municipal policies and programs, and community structural factors that affect individual differential rates for accessing social capital, and the funding of social capital and crime prevention programs (Hale, 1996).

Several key themes are associated with emerging locally or community-based crime prevention initiatives and social capital in Canada. Neighbourhood renewal is changing constantly and has changed dramatically over the last decade. For instance, while historically not always the case, safety, crime, and security are becoming an integral part of neighborhood renewal. In effect, this change has taken the form of new strategies that advocate for longer-term initiatives aimed at dealing with the political, social, economic, and cultural factors associated with crime prevention. Crime prevention should, therefore, focus on society itself. Perhaps the leading issues surrounding community development and community safety are those involving community partnerships, local governance, participation, and exclusion. These issues illustrate a growing concern for the ways in which decision-making power and material resources are distributed, the levels of trust among members in society, and the extent of social fragmentation and exclusion (Lane and Henry, 2004).

To unpack these complex issues, specifically in reference to social capital and community crime prevention programs, this paper explores how social capital, primarily defined as facilitating networks of relationships within a community, typically a neighbourhood, has been used in specific programs for crime prevention. Despite the above caveats concerning the complexity of evaluating the impact of social capital-based programs directly on crime prevention, there is general consensus in the research literature that during the last half of the century such programs have generally reduced crime and the fear it creates. Equally important, social capital-based programs have evolved from very specific police-focused crime prevention programs to comprehensive programs that include early childhood intervention and education-oriented policies, and innovative housing policies designed to encourage a mix of upper income, middle income, and social housing units for both rental and ownership.

While much of the history of social capital programs and their evaluation involves the American experience, more recently, several innovative policies consisting of comprehensive or non-traditional approaches are being implemented in Canada and Great Britain. This paper briefly discusses the concept of social capital before reviewing the empirical evidence concerning its impact on community crime prevention and describing several innovative comprehensive programs. Finally, a list of policy themes will be delineated for the purpose of assisting policy makers in using social capital research for assessing current programs and future directions.

Social Capital

Social capital has proven to be a popular, yet contested, concept in recent years. This paper is one in a series of studies on social capital as a public policy tool in which the authors have been asked to adopt a network-based understanding of social capital. A number of network-based definitions exist but, the authors of this paper adopted the definition of the Policy Research Initiative, which defines social capital as "the networks of social relations that

[may] provide access to needed resources and supports" (Judge, 2003). Since the 1930s, criminologists, sociologists, urban planners, and community activists, lead by Saul Alinsky from the University of Chicago, initiated programs to create citizen networks within impoverished neighbourhoods to reduce social disorganization. Alinsky and his academic mentors, Clifford Shaw and Henry McKay, asserted that social disorganization is a primary cause for the development of youth gangs and organized crime. Alinsky argued that it was necessary to create networks within the various multi-ethnic inner-city neighbourhoods that would bridge residents to each other and subsequently link them to the key community social institutions, such as the church and schools, and to economic institutions, such as unions, manufacturing companies, and banks. In turn, the latter economic networks would provide the linkages to neighbourhood political institutions that are integral to the mayor and city council, who control the provisions of essential resources, such as the local police, education and health services, and the economic incentives necessary for businesses to provide employment.

From this perspective, it is argued that it was imperative to form a network of citizen associations, such as the Industrial Area Foundation (IAF), which would formally institutionalize the networking needed to pressure the economic and political institutions into stabilizing social organization at the community level (Alinsky, 1942). Currently, there are 60 organizations in 50 American cities affiliated with the IAF. Again, the focal social institutions are typically non-denominational and religious-based, and provide bridging networks across community ethnic groups. Their policy focus is usually narrow and targets issues, such as affordable housing units, locating public sector jobs in their neighbourhoods, the minimum wage, and high school funding.

More recently, Robert Sampson provided impressive empirical evidence, based on an enormous research project, the Project on Human Development in Chicago Neighbourhoods, that when social capital is used in the manner prescribed by Alinsky, it is strongly correlated with lower serious crime rates. Sampson (1999) maintained that social capital, in the form of neighbourhood informal friendship and kinship networks designed to prevent minor street-focused crime and disorder, is correlated with far fewer homicides and other violent crimes. He referred to this form of social networking to reduce minor street crime and social disorder (e.g., loitering and drunkenness) as "collective efficacy."

Experimental social capital-based projects have been implemented under the auspices of local governments as well as state and federal governments in the United States. Historically, this has occurred in response to the failure of traditional police techniques to reduce high and persistent crime rates in those city neighbourhoods with high concentrations of disadvantage, often identified as urban ghettoes. Even in other more advantaged areas, as well as middle-income suburbs, social capital-based programs, such as Block Parents and Neighbourhood Watch, have been implemented in response to citizens seeking to increase the safety of their children and to effect a general reduction in property crime. In other words, in the United States and other advanced capitalist countries, there has been a long-standing consensus that social capital and community crime prevention programs can assist traditional police approaches. Moreover, the most recent research on social capital clearly suggests that community networks need to be expanded beyond just police linked or co-ordinated programs to include early education intervention programs, health care, and employment schemes.

Community Crime Prevention Programs

Broad consensus exists that city and locally based approaches that are carefully implemented not only prevent crime and victimization, but also promote community safety and contribute to the overall sustainable development of society (UN, 2002).

In Canada, the National Crime Prevention Strategy (NCPS) is an action plan to reduce crime by addressing its root causes and help build stronger, healthier communities. It is described as an integral component of the government's public safety agenda to:

- engage partners: governments, businesses, community groups, police agencies, non-governmental organizations (health, social, and criminal justice organizations), and individuals;
- help communities find solutions to local crime problems;
- promote public awareness of crime prevention and the root causes of crime and victimization; and
- conduct research on crime prevention and to identify, share, and distribute good practices (NCPS, Crime Prevention Partnership Program, 2004).

In simple terms, the NCPS enables the Government of Canada to broaden its partnerships and help communities design and implement innovative and sustainable ways to prevent crime through community-based action.

The community crime prevention programs (CCPPs) concept covers an ever-widening range. The origins of CCPPs lie with the overall increase in crime rates since the 1960s, primarily in the United States, combined with an increased fear of crime in many liberal democratic countries. Essentially, CCPPs are designed to reduce crime and the public's fear of crime. Traditionally, most programs focused directly or indirectly on the role of the police.

Regarding the integral relationship of the police and CCPPs, most traditional programs are explicitly identified as community policing or by the acronym COP. This approach involves a wide spectrum of policies ranging from the more traditional crime-control or crime-reactive strategies to managerial innovations that include proactive and routine police contact with neighbourhood citizens and business-persons, and subsequent responsibility of both management and foot patrol officers for crime prevention and fear reduction (Worrell and Zhoa, 2003). Whatever the specific police strategy, the key component of CCPPs is a direct connection between the police officer and the neighbourhood citizen. In turn, the essential characteristic of community crime prevention programs is the active citizen who can assist the police in a number of important and direct ways. For example, the active citizen can assist in identifying and reporting suspicious individuals, basic labelling of household and business properties, "target hardening" of automobiles, housing, and business premises, serving as block parents for children going back and forth to their homes, disseminating police information to neighbours, restructuring isolated spaces to increase lighting, citizen monitoring, and encouraging citizens to use the more conveniently accessible street front and mall police offices to obtain services or report crimes and suspicious incidents.

While the overwhelming number of CCPPs have focused on the above police-based approaches, several recent programs are based on developing social capital in neighbourhoods with high levels of concentrated disadvantage that primarily involve other community and government resources, such as teachers, health-care workers, government, and private housing officials.

In Chicago, there is a long tradition of developing neighbourhood resident-based networks in inner-city ethnic neighbourhoods that link primarily to neighbourhood churches, and to local businesses and governments to improve neighbourhood schools, housing, health, and employment opportunities. Again, by increasing the stability of the social organization of these economically poor neighbourhoods, crime, particularly youth crime, and social disorder can be reduced.

For example, in the 1960s, in Ypsilanti, Michigan, near Detroit, a social prevention program, the High/Scope Perry Preschool Study, was initiated in Afro-American inner-city neighbourhoods. The project was an initial attempt at using, bridging, and linking social capital in an early intervention program designed, in part, to reduce future criminality. The objective was to increase the probability that the children exposed to the intervention would have the skills necessary to have positive and successful experiences in the elementary school. It was hypothesized that initial school success increased the likelihood that children would remain in school and eventually graduate from high school. In addition, those children with positive early home and school experiences would be more resilient in avoiding delinquent behaviour as older children and crime as adolescents. A small sample of 123 low-income Afro-American children between the ages of two and three years of age were assessed as high risk for school failure. Fifty-eight of these children were randomly assigned to the preschool intervention program, while 65 children did not receive any program intervention. The program intervention took place from 1962 to 1967; however, program effects were assessed periodically until the subjects reached 40 years of age. To ensure that the objectives of the project were being met, the teachers received regular training and support in applying the principles of the project. In terms of process, teachers engaged the children on a daily basis in 2½ hour classes and once a week with 1½ hour visits to the children's parents. The teachers structured the classes in such as way as to allow them to observe and experience the children's self-initiated learning activities, small group and large group activities, and participation in basic age-appropriate child development experiences.

As demonstrated in Table 1, the long-term impact of this study in five key outcome measures is enormously impressive. Regarding crime prevention, experimental children were five times less likely than the control group children to have been arrested five or more times. In fact, a very small proportion of children from the experimental group (7 percent) were arrested five or more times. Regarding the cost effectiveness of the program, it was estimated

Table 1: Major Findings at Age 27: The High/Scope Perry Preschool Study

	Experimental Group Yes %	Control Group Yes %
Five or more arrests	7	35
Ever on welfare	59	80
$2,000 or more income per month	29	7
Own their home	36	13
High school graduation	71	54

Source: High/Scope Educational Research Foundation.

that every dollar spent on the experimental children saved taxpayers $12.90 in terms of the costs incurred had these children paralleled the long-term taxpayer-incurred costs of the control group children (Schweinhurt, in press).

This project was innovative, because it trained teachers to work closely with preschool children and their families in developing basic learning skills both at school and in the home. The High/Scope Perry Preschool Study developed the social capital that allowed parents to link to school resources in a manner that significantly decreased the prevalence of antisocial behaviour and crime in their neighbourhoods. Equally important, this project produced impressive long-term impacts in the experimental children's human capital and social capital compared to a group of children not participating in the program from the same neighbourhood.

Canada has a number of successful programs that are linked to the key objectives of crime prevention, such as Aboriginal Head Start, the Healthy Families Model, and the Better Beginnings-Better Future program in Ontario.

A related use of social capital within school contexts for crime prevention involves police school liaison officers (SLOs), particularly at the middle and high school levels. The main objectives of SLO programs are to establish informal links, first, between specially selected and trained police officers and teachers/administrators, and second, between the liaison officers and students. While some SLOs create a permanent presence in the schools, other trained officers regularly visit schools and become known to students through casual talks and other school social activities. A two way exchange often occurs whereby the police officers provide information to students regarding crime reduction and prevention strategies, how to avoid becoming a victim, and how to intervene informally to defuse potentially violent situations. In return, students are provided with a safe and efficient means to alert officers or other school officials to impending problems. Such social ties are also important in bridging social capital to community agencies for resources regarding family, health, and employment. The SLOs can also become an important resource for other programs, such as the Outreach Program of the Earlscourt Child and Family Centre in Ontario, since they can observe youth in a range of contexts and refer children in need of specialized resources. Moreover, SLOs can build social capital through their roles as after-school team coaches, teachers, or mentors. This is extremely important, because it gives youth access to police in contexts other than law enforcement and can develop a sense of trust and shared objectives between students and police.

While the High/Scope Perry Preschool Study was a model of how social capital linkages to the education system could be used to prevent or reduce youth crime in a disadvantaged neighbourhood context through a school-based program, a current trend in several countries, including Canada and the United Kingdom, is to broaden the scope of social capital-based programs to reduce neighbourhood crime. Several of these programs are discussed below; however, the broader approach is based on the general decline of social capital in certain Western countries. Again, it is evident in the research literature that stable, low-income or working-class neighbourhoods, along with middle and upper income neighbourhoods are typically characterized by higher levels of social capital, despite what Putman (1993) has asserted as a general decline in social capital in certain advanced capitalist countries, most notably the United States. These stable neighbourhoods, (i.e., low crime, stable residences, low density housing, a low number of lone parents, and stable or increasing housing values) have the networks of citizen contacts that allow for most children and adolescents to attend schools and leisure activities and, eventually, to obtain employment and develop mature adult relationships (Sampson, 1997). Not surprisingly, as discussed below, CCPPs are likely to be more effective in these stable neighbourhoods because social capital is either already available or can be easily facilitated which, in turn, allows for programs, such as Neighbourhood Watch and Block Watch for young children, to take hold. Prevention programs that do strengthen learning and parenting, and teach children interpersonal skills during the elementary grades create wide-ranging beneficial effects on functioning in early adulthood (Hawkins et al., 2005). For example, a study in the United States concluded that youth who received an intervention program to increase impulse control in elementary school were more likely to be well-adjusted adults by the time they were 21 years old. The intervention program focused on providing children with alternative strategies to getting what they wanted without resorting to aggressive behaviour (Cox, 2005).

Systematic Early High Risk Intervention Program Initiatives

The NCPS adopts a long-term approach to preventing crime and victimization through social development. Integral to the social prevention approach are the concepts of early intervention and targeting multi-level interrelated risk factors. However, the challenge inherent in pursuing these objectives is the attempt to achieve long-term change through relatively short-term commitments.

Social capital and crime prevention theories typically identify high-risk/multi-problem families as a major target for social capital-based programs. These families, often characterized by lone-parent families with very limited human capital (e.g., little education, low income, poor physical and mental health, and an equally limited degree of social capital on informal networks) would increase the possibilities of improving their lives. Youth from high-risk families are most likely to begin engaging in deviant lifestyles as children then adolescents and finally as adults (Loeber and Farrington, 1998). As evident in the High/Scope Perry Preschool Study, it has long been recognized that early intervention programs are an important crime prevention component, particularly in socially disorganized neighbourhoods. These programs focus on creating social capital by connecting teachers and teaching aides directly to one-on-one relationships with both the child and parents. In France, for example, early intervention programs link the mother and child to a wide array of services to enhance the healthy development of the child (Blatier and Corrado, 2002). In Canada, one of the most innovative programs directed to children between 6 and 12 years old is the Outreach Program of the Earlscourt Child and Family Centre in Toronto. The major crime prevention objective of this program is to "reduce police contact among a population at risk of engaging in delinquent conduct before 12 years of age" (Webster et al., 2002). This program consists of an impressive and comprehensive provision of services including:

> (1) SNAP Children's Group (formerly known as the Transformer Club), a 12-week after-school, structured group program focused on teaching self-control and cognitive-behavioral problem solving; (2) a concurrent 12-week SNAP Parenting Group focusing on effective child management; (3) family counselling based on SNAPP: Stop Now and Plan Parenting; (4) in-home academic tutoring; (5) school advocacy and teacher consultation; (6) victim restitution; (7) individual befriending of boys to help them hook up to structured community-based activities; and (8) a Friday Night Club for high-risk boys who have completed the SNAP Children's Group. Over the fifteen years of program operation, the ORP [Outreach Program] has become longer in duration (by adding the post-program club), increasingly "manualized", and more comprehensive (through the offering of befriending, advocacy, victim restitution, and tutoring components) (Webster et al., 2002: 208).

Experiences of CCPPs in Canada

A recent report from the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (2004) on social change, growth in crime, and urban quality of life suggested that enforcement alone is sufficient to solve the complex problems confronting communities. Education and employment development is also required to give people the skills and knowledge necessary to become productive members of society.

In Canada, some community-based crime prevention initiatives have been very successful, while others have faced numerous challenges in their attempts to achieve stated goals. In effect, programs focusing on targeted early childhood interventions and youth identified as at-risk for offending have been among the most promising (Léonard et al., in press). As well, the NCPS has done extensive work in the area of school safety and anti-bullying strategies. Results suggest that these initiatives do have a positive impact, especially in the areas of reducing and preventing antisocial behaviour and increasing a youth's commitment and participation in school.

Specifically, broad-based social capital driven programs targeting socially disorganized and high crime neighbourhoods can be illustrated by examples derived from Toronto and Vancouver.

Toronto

The Cultural Social Enrichment Program was developed by the San Romanoway Revitalization Association, in conjunction with the federal government's NCPS in the Jane and Finch area of Toronto, which has been identified as one of Canada's most impoverished, multi-ethnic, socially disorganized, and high crime (especially youth), urban communities. Within the Jane-Finch corridor of high-density housing complexes, youth crime and vandalism are pervasive. In two housing complexes, 85 percent of the 4,400 residents are recent immigrants speaking more than 80 different languages. There is also an extremely high youth unemployment rate of approximately 40 percent. In response to the crime afflicting this neighbourhood, social capital was created through the San Romanoway Revitalization Association. This community organization was founded by tenants, building owners, local businesses, police, community leaders, and academics. Through the classic forms of social capital, bonding among tenants, bridging across community stakeholders, and linkages to local law enforcement and federal agencies, the Cultural Social Enrichment Program was established and funded for a three-year period with $1,000,000 of the project budget derived from the private sector and an additional $300,000 from the NCPS. Like Alinsky's IAF, the San Romanoway project had specific and focused goals that were seen as contributing to the primary aim of reducing neighbourhood crime. These goals included:

- reducing crime and vandalism in the community;
- youth programs resulting in positive behavioural changes;
- enhancing police relations and improving security;
- refurbishing facilities;
- community building events; and
- stronger, safer, and more vibrant communities (Toronto Neighbourhood of San Romanoway – Cultural Social Enrichment Program, 2004).

A detailed action plan resulted in the introduction of an array of youth programs with consistently high attendance, multicultural education programs, and major structural changes to building, which included crime prevention through environmental design. There were changes to the lighting, security entrance, video monitoring, and landscaping of the community. The police also adopted a community policing approach that involved attending community events and addressing the specific problems of all key stakeholders, including tenants, property management, and businesses. Common social areas were upgraded, especially the swimming pool, tennis courts, basketball courts, and playground. Most important, early intervention programs, including working directly with parents, were introduced. In total, 14 programs covering all stages of child and adolescent development were created, such as computer clubs, mentorship programs, peer mediation groups, and breakfast programs. At the community level, several mechanisms were developed to promote a community identity and a process for providing feedback to the community concerning neighbourhood services, such as a seasonal newsletter, the Festival of Friends, Multi-Faith Holiday Season Celebration Dinner, and a community household survey.

Vancouver

Social capital was also the central theme for a crime prevention initiative in another of Canada's most notorious socially disorganized and high crime neighbourhoods, the Downtown Eastside of Vancouver. Unlike the Jane-Finch area in Toronto, the Downtown Eastside does not have high-density, low-income buildings housing a large recent multi-ethnic, immigrant population. According to Coyne (2004), the Downtown Eastside area has about 16,590 residents comprised mainly of males (62 percent) and a high proportion of seniors (22 percent). Moreover, two thirds of residents have incomes below the poverty line, nearly half (47 percent) belong to visible minority groups, and nearly half (48 percent) of Downtown Eastside residents over the age of 20 have not completed high school. There has also been an increase in homelessness, a dramatic increase in the visible use of crack cocaine and a very high incidence of HIV and hepatitis C infection among intravenous drug users, and more crime and victimization than any other parts of Vancouver (Coyne, 2004: 4-5).

The major crime problem does not involve youth, but the Downtown Eastside has one of the highest concentrations of drug addicts, sex trade workers, homeless people, and Aboriginal migrants in an area with a large business district, Chinatown to the south, and a major tourist centre to the west in Gastown. In addition, right in the heart of the Downtown Eastside is Vancouver's major police station and provincial court building. The housing stock includes low-rent hotel rooms, homeless shelters, and other rental units. The drug scene and sex trade are public and concentrated in certain small parks, alleyways, and on several side and main streets. The Downtown Eastside also has the highest concentration of social services and non-governmental resources directed toward addicts, street people, and Aboriginal migrants. During the last decade, the death rate among intravenous drug users and the presence of an alleged serial killer associated with the disappearance and apparent murders of more than 50 sex trade workers, many of whom were Aboriginal women, has created an escalated policy crisis. In response to the persistence of the drug crisis, the City of Vancouver joined the provincial and federal governments in planning, funding, and instituting the Four Pillar Drug Strategy. The Vancouver Agreement outlined the multi-level government-co-ordinated programs strategy of harm reduction, treatment, prevention, and enforcement. Similar programs have been successfully implemented in Australia, Germany, and Switzerland, and they are based on the obvious failure of the traditional police-focused approach in concentrated areas of high hard drug use in mitigating the above health tragedies among users. The prevention programs were initiated with extensive dialogue within communities involving Downtown Eastside residents of all groups, business persons and leaders, and the police. The police focus is on drug dealers versus users and assisting the latter to access community health care resources. In effect, several forms of social capital are involved in the Four Pillars Drug Strategy. This strategy is being evaluated; however, initial harm reduction impacts are already evident.

It is in this context that, in 1997, the City of Vancouver sought to address the increasing social disorganization and economic deterioration in the Downtown Eastside. Given the policy challenges, city decision makers sought to develop a strategy that also relied heavily on social capital to achieve its policy goals of addressing the high crime rates, health epidemic, inadequate housing, and economic revitalization, while involving low-income residents partly to ensure that they would not be displaced by any proposed changes. In 1998, Vancouver decision makers led the effort by submitting an application to the NCPC's Crime Prevention Investment Fund to implement a demonstration project. Given the scope of the project, which involved building networks among the three levels of government – municipal, provincial, and federal – and establishing specific linkages to the residents in varied neighbourhoods and to the business persons, as well as facilitating both the bridging among community groups and the bonding within them, funding was obtained from multilateral partners, including the City of Vancouver, the NCPC, Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, Status of Women Canada, the Department of Canadian Heritage, and the BC Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General (Coyne, 2004).

Social capital goals are embedded in most of this project's specific objectives: outreach and trust building with community representatives, development of the Chinatown Vision and Vision implementation, relationship building among Strathcona neighbourhood youth, youth programs (SUCCESS), and university student groups, youth employment, community cohesion, and communication and information.

Again, the building of the various types of social capital through specific programs is considered the key mechanism for crime prevention in the ambitious Downtown Eastside project. The initial evaluation of this project reached the following conclusion regarding outcomes:

- A change in understanding of drug and alcohol issues in the ethno-cultural community and diminished resistance to the Four Pillars Plan;
- 100% of Vancouver Chinatown Revitalization Committee (VCRC) members interviewed indicated a stronger understanding of the issues in the community and a greater awareness of the need to address root causes;
- VCRC worked with Carnegie to raise funds for an arts endowment;
- There is greater awareness of the need for alternative Community Economic Development (CED) evidenced by the support for low threshold employment or business development options;
- 100% of VCRC members interviewed expressed a commitment to maintaining the process after the project was over; at the time, they expressed concern about the availability of resources to support the work;
- Project staff and program representatives have informed the public and professional audiences about the nature of the project in numerous venues including conferences, political presentations, and community tables; and
- There has been a change in the way the Chinese media profiles the community, with more emphasis on the changes that are occurring (Coyne, 2004: 15).

No crime prevention impact data were provided in the project's summary evaluation report probably because it was anticipated that the likely consequence of this project on crime would not occur immediately, but rather in the longer term. In effect, any such large-scale social capital-based projects designed to reduce crime in a large multi-neighbourhood community of approximately 17,000 residents would take several years beyond the initiation of the various networks created.

Both of these Canadian social capital-based projects illustrate the current theoretical view that crime prevention in neighbourhoods and larger communities requires an expansive and elaborate construction of social capital as a policy tool. This view reflects the research that indicates that more narrow focused police-based CCPPs, while reducing crime hot spots, are insufficient in effecting a sustained and major reduction in crime in entire neighbourhoods characterized by substantial structural social disorganization and related youth-concentrated crime and certain major adult crimes (Sherman et al., 1997, 2002).

Housing, Social Capital, and Crime Prevention

In the United Kingdom, an ever broader social capital policy approach to crime reduction is being advocated. Clifford and Hope (2004) asserted that government-initiated incentives in effecting housing market renewal are necessary to stop and reverse the decline of neighbourhood social organization and the rise of crime and fear of crime which accentuates the spiralling decline. They maintain that the market value of housing in a neighbourhood reflects local residents and potential buyers' perceptions of the safety of a community. Social capital within socially disorganized and high crime neighbourhoods declines, since those residents with the formal means to leave ("respectables") do, while the remaining residents are either those who remain in their communities reluctantly ("vulnerables") or those who cannot leave ("people with problems"). Clifford and Hope (2004) asserted that without a mixture of diverse populations, it is extremely difficult to maintain or develop the neighbourhood networks necessary to monitor the minor forms of social disorder and petty crime beyond normal policing.

In England, the Blair Government created the Housing Market Renewal Fund (HMRF) to reverse the collapsing housing market in depressed economic areas in the North and the Midlands of England. This Fund is designed to intervene in the housing market and to renew it by attracting the necessary mix of diverse populations. Since this approach to facilitating social capital and crime prevention through housing market initiatives has only recently begun, no outcome evaluation research on crime reduction is available.

Clifford and Hope (2004) argued for the need to reduce crime in socially disorganized neighbourhoods by emphasizing the priority of a major housing strategy. Hope (1995) addressed the need for CCPPs to target neighbourhood or community contexts with low levels of social ties and little possibility of facilitating higher levels of social ties and negative pressures external to the targeted community, yet located in surrounding neighbourhood social structures. In his review of community crime prevention programs, Hope (1995) identified alternatives to the facilitation of dense neighbourhood resident networks to effect informal social control of crime. In particular, Hope referred to policies often used in affluent suburbs that emphasize retaining resident privacy, while excluding non-residents from the community and its services.

More recently, Clifford and Hope (2004) outlined several models that theoretically link social and "symbolic" capital in a community, crime and disorder, and the valuation of housing markets. This model serves as the basis for an innovative experiment by the British government in establishing its HMRF for the most economically deprived areas designed to stabilize and renew demand for housing. This focus on changing a key structural characteristic of a concentrated disadvantaged area is essential to the issue of residential stability and the flight of those residents who have the human, financial, and social capital to leave for more advantaged communities. In several Canadian and American cities, a parallel municipal housing policy involves rezoning concentrated disadvantaged neighbourhoods to attract private and/or private-public capital to "gentrify" a neighbourhood by attracting professional residents and providing affordable lower-income housing. Clifford and Hope (2004) stated that social capital and CCPPs are unlikely to affect the crime rate city-wide or even in bigger clusters of urban neighbourhoods characterized by large concentrations of disadvantaged residents without resorting to establishing sustainable linkages to national and regional political economic resources.

In Canada, there is no parallel HMRF in major cities partly because no total collapse of entire sectors of cities has occurred, and any parallel program in Canada would be under the jurisdiction of provincial governments. Nonetheless, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) conducted research in various cities and in Aboriginal communities to examine related issues involving housing, social capital, and community crime prevention (Corrado et al., 2003). There is little doubt that inner-city housing and rental market values in the Canadian urban context, to at least a partial extent, reflect Shaw and McKay's (1942) classical theoretical views that most youth crime and other signs of social disorder (e.g., graffiti, loitering, street sex trade, street drug trafficking and use, and homelessness) occur in those areas of a city with the most marginal housing market values.

The CMHC has been concerned with the housing markets of First Nations and other Aboriginal communities in Northern Canada and in urban communities in the Prairie Provinces since there has been major migration from reserve communities to the cities over the last several decades. Considerable research indicates a substantial portion of Aboriginal migrants reside in marginal housing markets, because rental units are affordable given both their limited financial resources and the fact that many migrants move back and forth to reserves and to other cities (White et al., 2004).

It is also evident that urban Aboriginal residents in certain inner-city, low-rental areas are more likely to be criminally victimized, more fearful of crime, and arrested for criminal offences (La Prairie, 1994). Recent research also provides a direct association between forms of social capital, housing issues, and criminal justice issues (Corrado et al., 2003a,b). However, as illustrated in the San Romanoway and Downtown Eastside projects, there have been multi-governmental level attempts at affecting crime prevention through the relationship between innovative housing policies and facilitating multi-forms of social capital in low-income housing project areas.

Another related approach consistent with Clifford and Hope's (2004) thesis about the need for enhanced housing market values to create the social capital necessary for neighbourhood crime prevention, is the use of smaller-scale urban areas directed at "gentrification" or neighbourhood improvement policies. Government by-laws, taxes, and other incentives are used to encourage real estate developers to build a mix of high-end and middle-income condominiums and apartments among social assistance-funded rental units. Again, this mix is hypothesized to create the types of social, economic, and political networks of concerned residents who have a stake in monitoring their neighbourhoods, especially with regards to the activities of youth and adults who are likely to engage in acts of social disorder and minor crimes. This gentrification process typically occurs on a block by block basis over time, rather than across the entire neighbourhood simultaneously.

In Canada, the National Homeless Secretariat has been involved in promoting the provision of housing and shelter for the homeless. One major policy initiative which relies primarily on the facilitating linkage social capital is the Sustainable Communities Partnership Initiatives (SCPI) in 61 communities across the country. As mentioned above, many inner-city neighbourhoods are perceived as socially disorganized, because of the visible presence of homeless persons, often with serious mental and physical health problems. Homeless shelters exist in the major Canadian cities; however, recent research indicates that, too often, homeless persons who access shelters are not networked to other community resources critical to responding to their basic survival and health needs. By developing and using an in-take instrument that immediately identifies basic needs, shelter personnel can triage their clients to the appropriate resources, including non-governmental resources, such as church food and clothing programs. In effect, by taking the responsibility for networking their homeless clients, shelters provide a "surrogate informal" networking function. For many homeless people, whose mental illnesses too often result in near complete isolation from family, friends, and acquaintances, surrogate networking is the only source of bridging and linkage social capital (Corrado and Cohen, 2004).

Restorative Justice

A promising policy approach to using social capital in crime prevention programs involves restorative justice themes. Most existing and long-standing restorative justice policies have been directed toward adolescents and children. Several key social capital themes are inextricably steeped in the restorative justice philosophy, such as community participation in crime prevention and reduction, a commitment on the part of the community to provide support for the reintegration of offenders, and community-based, long-term interventions. Most important, restorative justice advocates maintain that traditional juvenile justice systems for more than a century have been based on theories that focus on deterring and rehabilitating individuals, while largely ignoring vital informal networks essential to reintegrating delinquent or criminal youth into their community.

Bazemore and Erbe (2003) synthesized the dominant theories of youth reintegration and provided both the theoretical and policy practices for developing intervention social capital. They argued that standard restorative justice decision-making policies are based on the active participation and involvement of the basic forms of social capital since such policies typically include the victim, offender, and youth justice agents often in some combination with offender, victim, families, and community representatives. The aim of restorative justice interventions are to develop a mutually agreed upon, individual plan for the offenders that will allow them to understand the nature of the harm they have caused to themselves, the victim(s), and the community, and to accept responsibility for the harm caused. The ultimate objective of restorative justice initiatives is that the community participates and plays an active role in the reintegration of the offender into their immediate family and larger community. Types of restorative justice options consist of victim-offender dialogue mediation, family group conferencing, peacemaking or sentencing circles, and neighbourhood and merchant accountability boards. Again, the key social capital theme is that the offender has to be bonded to the family and positive peers, bridged to other community groups (e.g., church or sports), and linked to community resources to deal with multi-problem youth/family needs. In other words, restorative justice advocates assert that without the facilitation of informal networks, offenders and their families are, too often, unable to cope with their problems and the social disorganization of the neighbourhoods in which they reside.

Restorative justice approaches have an extensive evaluation history that generally validates their positive impact on youth crime prevention. Bazemore and Erbe (2003: 268) eloquently summarized their argument for restorative justice as an effective social capital approach.

> Intentional efforts to rebuild now-weakened informal networks of community social control and support for young people generally, and offenders, specifically are now taking the form of concrete policy and programmatic expressions, as seen, for example, in a new focus on the strengths and resources rather than risks and deficits of young people and their communities .... Such experiential models of reform and transition seem to move almost inevitably toward building or rebuilding community capacity to fashion new roles for young people as resources in the context of much strengthened young-adult relationships while also recognizing the limits of an individually focused, case-driven, professionalized response unconnected to efficacious communities. Despite challenges to transcend traditional bureaucratic and functional boundaries that artificially compartmentalize responses to crime, it is possible to speculate about how restorative practices could contribute directly to community building and "collective efficacy."

Aboriginal People

It has long been evident that traditional police-focused approaches to the disproportionately high rates of Aboriginal victimization and crime both on and off reserves have failed. Not only has the arrest and incarceration approach not reduced crime, but it also has been identified with discriminatory practices and tragedies whereby Aboriginal people have been victimized by the police. Aboriginal youth suicide, involvement in major youth/adult gangs in Winnipeg, and informal gangs in other Prairie and Western cities also has exemplified the larger problem of crime prevention among Aboriginal people. However, while on-reserve crime prevention remains a serious police challenge, equally serious problems exist among urban Aboriginal people (Lane and Henry, 2004).

Nonetheless, social capital-based programs also have been in effect in responding to crime prevention involving urban Aboriginal people. As La Prairie (1994) and White et al. (2004) explained, many urban Aboriginal migrants end up residing in socially disorganized neighbourhoods where they are isolated from family and friends. One innovative program in responding to urban Aboriginal residents is the National Aboriginal Association of Friendship Centres, typically located in or near socially disorganized Aboriginal neighbourhoods. These centres provide the culturally appropriate physical space and a wide range of networking opportunities to build new friendships, human capital, and linkages to community resources among Aboriginal people living in urban centres. Many urban Aboriginal people who regularly attend National Aboriginal Friendship Centres participate with their families. These centres have strict policies regarding alcohol and drugs, and aggressive behaviour. In effect, the emphasis is on providing safe and culturally relevant opportunities to adapt to urban life through social capital networks. In one study, a sample of Vancouver Aboriginal Friendship Centre members overwhelmingly expressed their approval of the resources and networking made available by the centre (Corrado et al., 2003a). Another goal, although not yet evaluated, is the reduction of youth crime and certain adult crimes by reducing isolation and the impact of neighbourhood social disorganization for vulnerable Aboriginal youth, women, lone-parent mothers, and others with inadequate human and social capital.

Exploring the Empirical Evidence from Robert Sampson's Chicago Study

Few major studies have examined the direct relationship between social capital and crime prevention outside the more narrow focused police-based programs. One major exception is Robert Sampson and his colleagues in the Project on Human Development in Chicago Neighborhoods (PHDCN). The concept of social capital and its relation to crime prevention can be traced back to Durkheim's (1893) classic work on anomie at the turn of the last century and the ground-breaking social disorganization theory and empirical research of Shaw and McKay (1942).

The importance of these early perspectives is that they targeted the breakdown of social institutions and high levels of unemployment, family dysfunction, dependence on social assistance, and substandard housing and social amenities as contributing to crime.

In large part, most traditional CCPPs appear to be designed to increase citizen participation in both informal networks of social control of neighbourhood crime and formal networks involving positive contacts with the police, regarding suspicious incidents and personal victimization. Sampson's theory of social capital is concerned in particular with informal networks and their relationship to neighbourhood patterns of crime generally and to homicides in certain areas of Chicago, more specifically. Sampson follows in the tradition of the Chicago School of Social Ecology of Neighbourhoods in explaining high crime rates. As mentioned above, Shaw and McKay (1942) demonstrated that juvenile crime rates in numerous Chicago communities/neighbourhoods appeared to be independent of formal policing resources or practices. Instead, Shaw and McKay focused on the link between neighbourhood characteristics – poverty or ethnic heterogeneity and residential instability – as the basis of social disorganization. In effect, social disorganization caused the intergenerational transmission of criminal behaviour. They were able to demonstrate empirically that certain stable working class neighbourhoods were associated with low juvenile crime rates, regardless of the neighbourhood's ethnic or racial characteristics. In contrast, socially disorganized neighbourhoods had persistently high crime rates.

Sampson expanded on this theoretical approach that emphasizes the primacy of social areas, such as neighbourhoods, to explain the enormous variations in crime in contemporary Chicago neighbourhoods. According to Sampson, it is the "concentration effects" of poverty in neighbourhoods that, over time, cause disadvantaged neighbourhoods, high crime, and increased levels of fear of crime. However, Sampson hypothesized that, even in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, there would be variations in both crime and fear of crime depending on the extent of social capital or related constructs, such as collective efficacy.

For Sampson and his colleagues (1997), collective efficacy exists when friendship and kinship ties are directed explicitly to reducing minor crime and social disorder in the neighbourhood. In effect, where social capital is transformed into collective efficacy, it is related to crime prevention, because it is through these informal mechanisms of a neighbourhood or community that residents are able to assist police in achieving public order. They refer to examples, such as "the monitoring of spontaneous playgroups among children" (1997: 918), as measures of the social control dimension of collective efficacy. In effect, these researchers suggest that collective efficacy is most effective in its ability to facilitate local residents' control of routine situations where minor crimes might occur and the police are unable or unwilling to engage in routine monitoring, crime prevention, or crime response. The cumulative effect of collective efficacy, as hypothesized by Sampson et al. (1997), is that it mediates the impact of neighbourhood structural disadvantage, including residential instability and even interpersonal violence. This said, they reiterate that strong social ties in "areas of concentrated disadvantage" will not, on their own, reduce the above structural disadvantages unless such ties facilitate collective actions directed to the social control of social disorder and minor crimes (i.e., through collective efficacy). Moreover, several human capital characteristics, including age, high socio-economic status, and homeownership, were all also related to higher collective efficacy levels.

In their analysis of the PHDCN data, Sampson et al.'s collective efficacy-based model explained more than 75 percent of the variation in levels of violence in the 343 neighbourhood clusters in Chicago's largely inner-city communities. They concluded that "collective efficacy thus retained discriminant validity when compared with theoretically relevant, competing social processes. Moreover, these results are sufficient; reductions in violence appear to be more directly attributable to informal social control and cohesion among residents" (1997: 923). It is important to note that Sampson et al. admitted they did not include potentially critical collective efficacy measures, such as political ties, which are important for establishing linkages to agencies of formal social control, especially the police, which include community crime prevention programs and other regular contacts with the police at the neighbourhood and administrative levels. Political ties are important, because they include linkages between neighbourhood residents, groups, their city councils, and the mayoral administration (i.e., those political representatives who can provide immediate resources to the neighbourhood). Moreover, political ties are essential in redressing the neighbourhood structural disadvantage factors that both increase neighbourhood violence and decrease social capital. For example, increasing the stock of social housing, along with mixed "gentrification" housing, tax incentives for establishing business zones, and funding highly effective Head Start programs in preschool, kindergarten, and elementary school, are all positively associated with substantially reducing the structural disadvantage profile of inner-city neighbourhoods.

Certain CCPPs have attempted to increase social capital through community policing approaches. Such a strategy involves direct and conjoint programs between the police and neighbourhood residents to respond to and rectify physical disorder by focusing on the deterioration of urban landscapes, a theme central to Wilson and Kelling's (1982) "broken windows" theory of social disorganization. These researchers argue that physical disorder is directly linked to social disorders or "incivilities," because the former is indicative of neighbourhood resident's unwillingness to confront local crime either through personal interventions or by contacting the police. There are CCPPs, therefore, that attempt to facilitate the various forms of social capital necessary to deal with these social disorders. Often, the broken windows theory is also the basis for aggressive police strategies to control public incivilities, such as street harassment by youth (e.g., squeegee youth, persons with mental disorders asking for spare change, public intoxication, and youth gangs in business and transit locations). In effect, the broken windows theory identifies the direct or causal connection between public disorder and serious crime.

Sampson and Raudenbush (1999) examined this direct connection between public disorder and predatory crime and argued that the analysis of the data from another part of their research project on Chicago neighbourhoods indicated that only a weak positive correlation existed and that this relationship was spurious when neighbourhood structural disadvantage and collective efficacy were added. They address the relevance of their research to the relationship between social capital and CCPP.

> [V]isible street-level activity linked to prostitution, drug use, and panhandling does not necessarily translate into high rates of violence. Public disorder may not be so "criminogenic" after all in certain neighborhood and social contexts .... Put differently, the active ingredients in crime seem to be structural disadvantage and attenuated collective efficacy more so than disorder. Attacking public disorder through tough police tactics may thus be a politically popular but perhaps analytically weak strategy to reduce crime, mainly because such a strategy leaves the common origins of both, but especially the last, untouched. A more subtle approach suggested by this article would look to how informal but collective efforts among residents to stem disorder may provide unanticipated benefits for increasing collective efficacy ... in the long run lowering crime (Sampson and Raudenbush, 1999: 638).

Sampson and Raudenbush (1999) provided a model for constructing an effective CCPP. They state that such a program should involve mobilizing neighbourhood residents to reduce physical disorder by cleaning up the neighborhood through activities, such as removing garbage, erasing graffiti, and dealing with other visible signs of physical deterioration. Through this collective experience, new social ties and awareness of mutual commitment by participating residents increases the social capital needed to sustain not only a reduction in physical disorder, but also social disorder. In effect, they appear to suggest that a CCPP which initiates and fosters social ties directed initially at a limited objective, such as removing minor signs of physical disorder, is likely to have a demonstrated positive effect on both CCPP participants and other community residents who observe the program's impact. The neighborhood's residents need to experience or observe the benefits of collective efficacy to increase the social capital necessary to respond to the more challenging informal social control practices needed to cope with the more threatening interpersonal street "incivilities." They further suggest that dealing with interpersonal street incivilities should involve neighbourhood-mobilized connections to formal control agencies. In other words, police-based initiatives should be in response to the collective efficacy efforts of neighbourhood residents. Again, Sampson and Raudenbush (1999) implied that informal social control, in the form of collective efficacy, needs to be seen as effective for social capital to be developed, and must be sustained for crime prevention to be successful in structurally disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

In support of this CCPP model, Sampson (1999) cited a comprehensive evaluation review of actual experimental programs in many major US cities. In particular, Sampson referred to Keegan's (1996) reporting substantial reductions in social disorder and crime as a result of a quasi-experimental evaluation of community policing strategies in several districts in Chicago. Sampson (1999) asserted that CCPPs need to focus on informal social control of teenage peer groups, because social disorganization theory and research contends that it is usually teenagers who are most persistently and visibly involved in social disorder, vandalism, and street gangs. Sufficient social capital networks, however, have to either already exist or should be created, because adult supervision and control of teenagers needs to be routine. Again, his model is based on activating social capital in the form of collective efficacy to co-operate with formal social control agencies and related formal community resources, particularly schools and police.

The CCPPs should, therefore, facilitate policies that involve:

- organized supervision of leisure-time youth activities;
- enforcement of truancy and loitering laws;
- staggered school closing times to reduce thresholds or flash points of peer congregation;
- parent surveillance and involvement in after-school and nighttime youth programs; and
- adult-youth mentoring systems (Sampson, 1993: 273).

It is critical to also point out that for such model CCPPs to maintain and expand their crime prevention impacts requires the use of social capital to link to major and formal political and economic institutions as these institutions control access to key financial and material resources (Sampson, 1993). Moreover, social capital must also connect to formal social control agencies' policies and resources. Sampson (1993), for example, referred to:

- utilizing innovative land use planning to promote community based resident interactions and identification integrating community with all the agencies responsible for early child care health, child-rearing, and family conflict resolution;
- facilitating the neighbourhood residential stability through public-private revitalization of deteriorating housing stock;
- deconcentrating poverty by demolishing high-rise complexes and spreading small social housing units throughout the city;
- maintaining the municipal service base, especially police, firefighting, health, and education services; and
- increasing social capital and its effectiveness in responding not only to crime, but also related socio-political-economic community issues (275-276).

Sampson and Bartusch (1998) examined another important theme involving the relationship between social capital and CCPPs, namely the neighbourhood context of racial differences. They concluded that there is no evidence of a race-based or Black subculture of violence, and African-Americans were less tolerant of crime than European-American respondents. However, Sampson and Bartusch (1998) found that certain neighbourhoods, specifically inner-city ghetto areas, had "elevated levels of legal cynicism, dissatisfaction with, and tolerance of deviance generally defined" (1998: 800). This latter result is hardly surprising given the negative history of policing and related criminal justice agencies in Chicago in the inner-city ghettos areas for much of the last century. Again, Sampson repeated his above assertion that CCPPs, especially those directly involving the police, have to incorporate several targeted practices designed to offset the mistrust toward formal control agencies and neighbourhoods defined by concentrated disadvantages.

Morenoff et al. (2001), using the Project on Human Development in Chicago Neighbourhoods data, examined several issues directly related to collective efficacy and CCPPs. First, they examined the relative importance of the existence of dense social ties in predicting the most violent neighbourhood crime, namely homicide rates. Morenoff et al. found that social ties had a significant and positive relationship with collective efficacy, even though they did not have an independent association with neighbourhood homicide. The authors concluded that "social ties create the capacity for informal social control, but it is the act of exercising control that is related to crime rather than the existence of social networks per se" (Morenoff et al., 2001: 548). They also provided convincing findings that spatial proximity to other violent neighbourhoods has an independent relationship with neighbourhood homicide rates. In effect, CCPPs should consider the importance of adjacent neighbourhoods' violent crime rates and whether expanding these programs to such neighbourhoods is critical to the success of a CCPP in the originally targeted neighbourhood.

As discussed briefly above, CCPPs often attempt to address the high rates of fear of crime, particularly in those neighbourhoods with high crime rates. Social capital theory's central premise is that CCPPs that facilitate social capital in such neighbourhoods will reduce the fear of crime. Yet, the research literature is often contradictory. In earlier Canadian studies, Hartnagel (1979) and Sacco (1993) did not find any relationship between "fear of crime and indicators of neighbourhood cohesion, social activity, or social support" (Hale, 1996: 144).

It is also important to reiterate that CCPPs often target a reduction in crime, as well as the fear of crime. The fear of crime literature has grown enormously since the 1960s, and there is no doubt that it remains a public and political priority. The primary reasons CCPPs often focus on fear of crime are that those citizens who are most fearful of crime, for whatever reason, would likely benefit immediately from CCPPs (Skogan and Maxfield, 1981). Increases in the fear of crime among neighbourhood members has been the basis of considerable theorizing for the actual and perceived decline of neighbourhood safety from crime. Several thorough literature reviews on the fear of crime, such as those by Fattah and Sacco (1989) and Hale (1996), provide overwhelming evidence that not only is the fear of crime debilitating individually, but it also contributes to the further decline of structurally disadvantaged neighbourhoods, which can be defined as those neighbourhoods with high concentrations of the unemployed, the poor, lone-parent families, and racial/ethnic minorities, and characterized by high residential instability, inadequate housing, and few professionals and businesses. In effect, the fear of crime creates mistrust in structurally disadvantaged neighbourhoods, which inhibits informal social control networks critical to local crime prevention generally and, more specifically, in relation to the impact of CCPPs.

Recommendations

There is sufficient research evidence in both the evaluations of the broader and long-term social capital programs and police-focused CCPPs to be optimistic about the relevance and importance of social capital in crime prevention. While too many social capital-based programs either have not been subjected to more sophisticated evidence-based evaluations (Welsh and Farrington, 2001) or these programs have not been in existence long enough to evaluate their impact on crime prevention, several specific recommendations can be tentatively derived from the research presented in this paper.

Before making some recommendations, it is important to review the central themes presented in this review. Most CCPPs tend to be designed to increase citizen participation in both informal networks of social control of neighbourhood crime and formal networks predominantly focused on establishing positive relations with formal institutions and organization, such as the police. This is important, because it is the concentration effects of poverty in neighbourhoods that, over time, cause disadvantaged neighbourhoods, high crime, and increased levels of fear of crime and a subsequent reduction in social capital. However, it should be noted that not all communities have the same capacity for positive relations with formal institutions. For example, for a wide range of reasons, many Aboriginal communities and economically disadvantaged neighbourhoods have high levels of mistrust for the police. For neighbourhood-based crime prevention programs to be effective requires a threshold of collective efficacy to exist, which occurs when friendship and kinship ties are directed explicitly to reducing minor crime and social disorder in the neighbourhood.

The cumulative effect of collective efficacy is that it mediates the impact of neighbourhood structural disadvantage, including residential instability, homelessness, and interpersonal violence. However, strong social ties in disadvantaged neighbourhoods will not substantially reduce structural disadvantages unless such ties facilitate collective actions directed to the social control of social disorder and minor crimes. In effect, through collective experience, new social ties and awareness of mutual commitment by participating residents increases the social capital needed to sustain effective crime prevention.

The method of sustaining and transmitting collective efficacy to others is through residents experiencing or observing its benefits. This has the effect of increasing the social capital necessary to respond to the more challenging informal social control practices needed to cope with crime and disorder. Given this, police-based initiatives on social disorder should be in response to the collective efficacy efforts of neighbourhood residents. Social capital must also connect to formal social control agencies' policies and resources, because it is the social ties which produce the ability for informal social control, but it is in employing this control, rather than the existence of social networks, that is positively related to crime prevention.

Integrated and Multisectoral Approaches

Social capital-based programs must be connected to formal social control agencies' policies and resources. It is, therefore, vitally important that community crime prevention programs in socially disorganized and high crime areas continue to integrate early intervention social capital infused programs, effective police strategies, and the recent innovative housing market value renewal strategies.

Most important, complex social capital projects need to be viewed as a longer-term movement for social change with enormous potential positive impacts on the quality of life for the most disadvantaged groups in Canada. Early interventions, outreach programs, and the continuing adjustments in response to evaluation needs that are occurring in crime prevention are important illustrations of innovative ways of incorporating social capital into programs and policies for children and youth vulnerable to crime and victimization.

Co-ordination of Programs in Urban Areas

Social capital programs should continue to focus on socially disadvantaged neighbourhoods and their broader community contexts. The federal government must continue to co-ordinate and fund various experimental projects, some of which may be extremely costly. A co-ordinated effort is imperative, because few communities have the capacity to monitor programs and conduct the necessary evidence-based evaluations of their programs. Federal funding is necessary, again, because provinces, cities, and smaller communities, historically are reluctant to place scarce resources in major social capital focused policies and projects. Yet, it is abundantly evident that it is in the major metropolitan neighbourhoods discussed above where social disorganization has so negatively impacted vulnerable groups, primarily as victims of crime, neglect, and abuse.

Social capital in the form of collective efficacy needs to be a policy outcome in socially disadvantaged neighbourhoods. In effect, informal social networks need to be facilitated with the expressed objective of participating in assisting the partners involved (such as the police) in responding to various forms of social disorder involving children and youth and other marginalized populations.

Local Partnership and the Use of Good Practice

Community Crime Prevention Programs need to be based on activating social capital in the form of collective efficacy to co-operate with formal social control agencies and related formal community resources, particularly schools and police. While police school liaison officer programs have not been reviewed in this paper, the authors, have had extensive experience conducting workshops with these officers and teachers. These programs have social capital functions by providing informal networks among high-risk students, victims, teachers, administrators, and parents. Given the reported widespread fear of intimidation and related bullying in schools, police school liaison officers can provide early intervention assistance at the middle school level where the absence of positive family and peer informal networks are associated with increased criminality. This form of social capital will likely be more important given the trend toward increased lone-parent families, ethnic/racial diversity, the competitive environment for employment, and the apparent negative impact of the popular media in possibly accentuating the likelihood of violence for those children and adolescents already displaying early and persistent aggression and violence.

Conclusion

While the research literature is overwhelmingly positive about the relationship between social capital and CCPPs, several cautions have been noted. First, the assumption that social capital always has a positive impact on crime prevention is problematic. Most important, strong bonding social capital among youth, especially within areas of high concentrated disadvantage, can foster informal criminal groups and even criminal gangs. Also bridging social capital through police initiated community programs, such as neighbourhood watch, can result in unwarranted increases in the fear of crime. This increase in the fear of crime has sometimes occurred when CCPP participants share information about a limited number of criminal incidents and then proceed to generalize incorrectly that high neighbourhood levels of crime exist.

Second, the research literature is generally positive about social capital in CCPPs. However, this research has major validity limits. Most important, too few experimental studies can establish definitive causal links. In other words, most of the research relies on statistical relationships, therefore, caution has to be exercised in concluding that social capital-based CCPPs reduce crime, fear of crime, and victimization. Nonetheless, the preponderance of the research suggests a significant positive relationship between social capital and crime prevention.

Overall, therefore, it appears that social capital programs should continue or be established for vulnerable groups living in urban areas, including marginalized families of recent immigrants, Aboriginal families, homeless people, marginalized youth, and youth living in the street. Informal networks developed in programs, such as the National Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres, along with linkages to formal government and non-government resource networks are vitally important in allowing at-risk youth and adults to make the transition into pro-social relationships and employment, thus increasing the communities or neighbourhoods' potential to reduce crime and social disorder.

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Commentary on "Social Capital and Community Crime Prevention Programs"

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Crime and victimization take a serious toll on the safety and quality of life for every community and its residents across Canada. Affected communities often lack the resources and capacity to deal effectively with crime and its underlying factors. Due to the complexity and dynamic nature of risk factors, no one agent or institution can adequately address them. To that end, effective crime prevention strategies to improve community safety and well-being are crucial for creating and sustaining safe homes, schools, and communities.

On the relationship between social capital and crime prevention, it is clear that social capital, described in terms of benefits to individuals as a result of the creation of personal and social networks (e.g., within families and communities), is paramount to solving complex community problems (e.g., crime and community safety). In Canada, the National Crime Prevention Centre (NCPC) focuses on crime prevention through social development as a long-term, proactive approach. It is directed at removing those personal, social, and economic factors that lead some individuals to engage in criminal acts or to become victims of crime.

This approach has been proven to strengthen the quality of life for individuals, families, and communities. Longitudinal studies in England, the United States, Canada, New Zealand, Sweden, and elsewhere, provide strong evidence of the impact of crime prevention programs for at-risk individuals, families, and communities to "level the playing field," promote social capital, and help reduce criminality.

The true connection between social capital and crime prevention, particularly for early intervention and targeting multi-level interrelated risk factors, is that it provides a more comprehensive and sustainable approach for understanding and addressing societal issues, such as crime and victimization. Furthermore, as social capital studies suggest, mutual trust and neighbourly altruism are key factors in explaining inter-neighbourhood differences in (the reduction or prevention of) crime rates. More specifically, it is the ability or capacity of the community to control the precursors of crime, levels of trust, respect, and self-esteem within and between community members that act as the catalyst for effective action against crime and victimization at the neighbourhood level.

International guidelines, developed in partnership with, and supported by, the National Crime Prevention Center set out the necessary elements for effective crime prevention including a basic principle that all levels of government should play a leadership role in developing effective and humane crime prevention strategies, and in creating and maintaining institutional frameworks (*Guidelines for the Prevention of Crime*, United Nations, 2002).

What is also recognized nationally and internationally is that effective community-based solutions to crime and victimization need to focus on social inclusion, partnership networks, and knowledge transfer and dissemination. From this perspective, it is vital to understand that the reduction or prevention of crime does not occur because citizens are more likely to intervene when a crime has been committed, but because it makes them more likely to intervene *before it does happen*.

It is about creating a context for broad and effective involvement of crime prevention partners at all levels. This includes partnerships working across ministries and between authorities, community organizations, non-governmental organizations, the business sector, and private citizens. Creating a sustainable future for crime prevention is not just about supporting individual organizations or communities. Effective crime prevention is also about creating a network of individuals, organizations, and sectors that have a vested interest in making an investment in community safety and providing them with the knowledge and resources they need to facilitate and sustain their collaborative efforts.

Overall, it is important to understand that complex social capital and crime prevention initiatives need to be viewed as a longer-term "movement for social change" that can have great potential for positive impacts on the safety and quality of life of the most disadvantaged individuals and communities.

UNDERSTANDING ABORIGINAL POLICING IN A SOCIAL CAPITAL CONTEXT

Ralph Matthews, University of British Columbia, and Rochelle Côté, University of Toronto

"There are two primary objectives for the provision of policing services on reserves. The first is to ensure that Indians have access to a level of service which is equivalent to the services received by other communities in similar circumstances. The second objective is to provide the appropriate level of service in a manner which is sensitive to the environment and special requirements of Indian communities" (INAC, 1990: 13).

"When I grew up as a child, I needed to be babysat. I got my education and I don't need to be babysat any more. I, as a Nation, don't need to be babysat any more" (Chief Anfinn Siwallace, Chief Councillor, Nuxalk Nation, Bella Coola, in a speech in Bella Coola, British Columbia, July 22, 2004).[1]

"From an academic perspective, there are some very interesting research topics that merit attention. These would focus on the role of the FN [First Nations] police chiefs as socialization agents and jurisdictional negotiators with respect to community and external authorities, the many facets and strategic implications of professionalism in FN policing, the diversity of social construction of aboriginal policing as an idealized system of policing, the significance of traditional and diverse cultural values for professional FN policy, and the factors facilitating and constraining the development of pluralism in policing styles among FNs in Canada" (Solicitor General, 2001: 47).

Introduction

This paper has, as its goal, an examination of the relevance of a social capital perspective to the process of Aboriginal policing in Canada. More particularly, it focuses on the role of social capital in the context of policing in Aboriginal band communities and reserves.[2] It should be noted that neither author claims significant expertise on the subject of Aboriginal policing. Nor does this paper present the findings of new empirical research into the social capital of Indian communities in Canada. Rather, our expertise is in the general area of social capital analysis and research. We examine the existing literature on Aboriginal policing in Canada and elsewhere and, based on our understanding of that literature, we consider whether a social capital perspective might provide insight into the delivery of Aboriginal policing in Canada.

There are a variety of ways in which that relationship can be addressed. *From a focus on the social capital of the community itself*, one can consider whether there is evidence that the existing social capital of Aboriginal communities influences the effectiveness of the delivery of policing within them. Alternatively, one can consider whether it is possible for those responsible for policing in Aboriginal communities to enhance the levels of social capital and, in so doing, either reduce the need for policing, or change the way in which police officers carry out policing activities. Yet again, there is the possibility that "negative" social capital relations in an Aboriginal community may increase the levels of crime and make it more difficult for police officers to perform their necessary duties. *From a focus on the social capital relations of police officers*, it is possible to consider how the social capital relations within the police force itself, may either positively or negatively influence the type and effectiveness of policing that occurs in Aboriginal communities. Related to this, it is relevant to examine whether a police officer's own social capital ties within an Aboriginal community may facilitate or hinder that officer's ability to work effectively within the community.

In actual situations, it is probably not possible to separate these various dimensions; all of them have some bearing on the analysis below. Throughout that analysis, we are guided by an overriding interest in examining existing literature for any evidence that a focus on social capital and social networks may be helpful in understanding the challenges of policing in Aboriginal communities. We see social capital as a useful analytic framework for understanding the dismal situation of crime and punishment that is part of social life in so many of Canada's Indian reserve communities.

The Challenges of Policing in Aboriginal Communities

The social situation in which Aboriginal policing takes place is one of challenge. The quotes that began this paper capture, in different ways, the broad challenges facing any Aboriginal policing program. The first statement, taken from a government task force report, describes the goals of a program intended to respond to real security and public safety needs of communities, while being aware of their unique character and culture. The second, from a current elected Chief Councillor, captures the sense of identity and desire for self-government and independent management that is characteristic of most First Nations, and thus provides a glimpse of the social and administrative context within which an Aboriginal policing official must operate. The third statement, from a government study and based on interviews with Aboriginal police chiefs, sets out some of the social contextual strains that beset Aboriginal policing officials. Taken together, they describe how an Aboriginal police officer is expected to serve as a representative of external legal authority, while operating within the cultural and social organization of Aboriginal bands intent on self-government and self-regulation, independent of that authority.

To make matters more complex, Aboriginal policing occurs in a context that is acutely homogenous yet startlingly heterogeneous. The heterogeneity is found in the cultural heritages of the bands themselves. As White et al. (2003: 3) noted: "There are many nations, many cultural and linguistic roots – in short, many particularities." In one example from our own work in coastal British Columbia, we identified at least 79 First Nation bands and tribal councils representing a wider range of cultures and language groups than are found in western Europe.

In contrast, the homogeneity is found in the consistent patterns of exclusion, poverty, and crime that are widespread among Aboriginal groups, but are particularly prevalent in Indian reserve communities. This depressing chronicle of criminal activity is presented as "Context and Background" in the *Indian Policing Policy Review* (Task Force, 1990). It shows a high level of crime and violence in reserve communities throughout all provinces and territories. Overall crime rates ranged from 156.8 per 1,000 persons in Quebec to 471.6 per 1,000 in Yukon. In all provinces and territories, the rates vastly exceeded those in the general population (Task Force, 1990: 42) by several hundred percent. The situation was even more devastating in Indian reserve communities, particularly for violent crimes. While the average number of on-reserve crimes per 1,000 was about four times the national average, the rate of violent crimes (i.e., crimes against persons) on reserves was six time the national average (Task Force, 1990: 3). "These data indicate that in general Indian communities do not enjoy the same protection of the person in general and security of property as non-native communities. They also indicate that the incidence of crime places a heavy burden on the local police services" (Task Force, 1990: 3).

The role of the police services in dealing with this situation is reflected in the incarceration rates of persons of Indian descent in Canada, particularly when compared to the population as a whole. While Indians make up only two percent of the general population, they comprise about 10 percent of the penitentiary population and 13 percent of the female penitentiary population. In Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta combined, Indians comprise five percent of the population but account for 32 percent of the inmate populations (Task Force, 1990: 3). Focusing more directly on some of the outcomes of policing, Aboriginal men and women accounted for 18 and 23 percent respectively of the provincial and federal inmate populations across Canada in 1999. These rates are significantly higher than for any other ethnic or racial group in Canada.

These statistical data are reflected in the findings of the 1999 General Social Survey of Canada that provides self-reported data as compared to the official crime statistics we have been citing. Three times as many Aboriginal people reported being victims of violent crimes compared to non-Aboriginals. Similarly, Aboriginal people reported being victims of spousal abuse at a rate two and a half times higher than non-Aboriginal people. These findings demonstrate clearly that Aboriginal persons in Canada remain considerably more at risk of victimization through violent crimes and spousal abuse than the rest of the population.

These criminal activities take place in Indian communities that embody a complex set of social conditions and unique challenges for policing officials. The *Report on Aboriginal Peoples in Canada* (CCJS, 2001) provided evidence that 56 percent of residents on reserve communities in 1996 were under the age of 25. Eleven percent of Aboriginal families were lone-parent families compared to only five percent of the non-Aboriginal population, with women at the head of 86 percent of these lone-parent families. Young Aboriginal people were less likely to attend high school than non-Aboriginal youth, and over

54 percent of Aboriginal people had not completed high school in 1996. A further 24 percent of Aboriginal people, or one in four, were unemployed compared to only 10 percent of non-Aboriginal people in 1996. Those who are employed had an average income that was 62 percent that of non-Aboriginal people.

The human costs of such social conditions and crime rates are obvious. The social capital costs are also severe. Several recent studies from around the world made explicit the link between high levels of crime and incarceration, and the impact this has on social capital relations and trust within local communities. For example, Hagan and Dinovitzer's (1999: 122) analysis of the impact of high rates of imprisonment of black males and females, described the impact this has on African American community social capital. "The collateral consequences of imprisonment may be extensive. The most obvious concern is that the effects of imprisonment damage the human and social capital of those who are incarcerated, their families, and their communities, including the detrimental impact of imprisoning parents on their children."

The relevance of a social capital perspective to understanding the impact of incarceration is also highlighted by Edney (2002: 229) who suggested that a social capital lens allows researchers to measure the impact of imprisonment within the larger context of the community instead of just on the individual. Similarly, in discussing the effect of imprisonment on indigenous Australian populations, Bennett (1999) stated that the effects of imprisonment, in combination with other social factors, ensures that indigenous communities remain split, destabilizing families and friendships, creating an inability to form social capital. Edney (2002: 230) concluded his discussion of imprisonment and social capital by stating:

> In sum, the concept of "social capital" allows for the consideration of the devastation wrought upon indigenous communities by imprisonment and which transform what may be an individual tragedy for a non-indigenous person and his or her community, to an occurrence for indigenous communities that makes that same process loaded with historical and political significance.

The message inherent in these various analyses from around the world is that high rates of involvement with the criminal justice system along with equally high rates of social, economic, and health problems, have a negative impact on the ability of community members to form and maintain social capital relations. However, it should be noted that the relationship between social capital and high levels of imprisonment may be mutually reinforcing. Indeed, the lack of strong social capital relations through a community may have led to these same high levels of crime and imprisonment. This provides a necessarily important context when considering the role of policing within Aboriginal communities. It is possible that many communities start with a deficiency in their ability to foster social capital, and this lack of social capital may, itself, be a significant predictor of criminal behaviour.

Understanding Social Capital in the Context of Policing

We need to clarify quite explicitly what is involved in social capital analysis and its measurement. The label "social capital" is used in a variety of ways and the empirical measures of social capital are varied and frequently divergent. One of the most straightforward and easily measured approaches is that taken by Lin (2001: 19) who defined it as "an investment in social relations with expected returns." From this perspective, a person's social capital constitutes the resources that individual is potentially able to access through her/his social network relationships. Given this, from a social capital perspective, one's network relationships are themselves a resource that may be used to obtain desirable benefits. Seen this way, social capital is measured in terms of the *quantity* and *quality* of resources that network ties potentially provide or, better still, ultimately do provide, within a community. While we agree on this definition of social capital at the level of individual relationships, we have some difficulty accepting Lin's focus on individual action as the only ingredient of social capital.

To articulate the basis of our divergence from Lin, we turn to Sacks' recent examination of co-operation within "civil society," in which he distinguished between relations in society that are *contractual* and those that are *covenantal* (2002: 142-160). For Sacks, economic and political relations are contractual whereas covenantal relationships are those "where we help others and they help us without calculations of relative advantage" (p. 151). From this perspective, social capital arises through these relationships of trust that exist as an aspect of community life and that involve relationships based on giving without necessary regard for reciprocity.

With this distinction, we believe we have set forth an important aspect of social capital relationships that is most relevant to Aboriginal policing. In addition to referring to social capital as social networks that may provide individuals or groups with access to resources (such as support, information or enhanced capacities), we also see social capital as a collective asset that is a characteristic of some communities and not others. That collective asset can be understood in terms of levels of trust, social support, and reciprocity within the community. These dimensions of social interaction enable individuals to interact without recourse to contracts and formal agreements. That is, trust and social support replace dependence on contracts, and facilitate interaction without the need for enforcement, including police enforcement.[3] Furthermore, just as individuals may have varying levels of social capital relations, so may communities themselves be seen collectively to have differing levels of trust, social support, and reciprocity that are not simply the aggregated sum of the social capital of individual members, but constitute attributes of the community itself that facilitate organizational activity and linkages.

This perspective can simultaneously focus attention on an individual's relationships within her/his own social networks, and also on those collective levels of community trust and reciprocity inherent in social groups and in the community as a whole. In this light, covenantal relationships within communities are a resource that can be simultaneously the means to effective Aboriginal policing, and also an outcome of it. Expressed another way, we see social capital analysis as providing a way to analyze simultaneously the micro and macro levels of social life that impact on the ability of both communities and police officials to develop effective and appropriate policing strategies and practices in Aboriginal communities.

Social capital relations can be analyzed in terms of *bonding, bridging* or *linking* relationships. Bonding social capital forms to protect, preserve, and maintain existing relationships. This type of network is characterized primarily by strong ties among family and friends, or within a particular community (Lin, 2001), including Aboriginal communities (Mignone, 2003). In such circumstances, strong ties are used to foster social cohesion by bonding individuals together and establishing firm network boundaries. While generally a positive attribute of community life, too strong a set of bonding relationships may separate individuals and groups within a community from the community as a whole and hamper the effectiveness of any policing efforts. Thus, gangs, warrior groups, and extremely strong clan ties may make it difficult for policing activity to serve and protect all community members.

In contrast, bridging social capital is found in relationships that link individuals to other persons, networks, and groups outside their immediate network of social relations (Granovetter, 1973; Mignone, 2003). This form of social capital extends network boundaries by adding to the existing number of members. Putnam (2000: 23) referred to bonding social capital as a sociological superglue, while he described bridging social capital as sociological WD-40 (i.e., a lubricant).

Used less frequently, the concept of linking social capital is generally used to describe hierarchical relations that link people across social classes or other strata. It is also sometimes employed to describe relationships between institutions and communities rather than between individuals and groups, and in this usage distinguishes those network resources that are vertically accessible through contacts beyond the community, as opposed to being horizontally available through contacts within the community (cf. Mignone, 2003).

Such conceptual analysis is relevant to an understanding of the role of the Aboriginal police officer in a community and the social network context. It implies that Aboriginal police officers are better able to fulfill their duties if they avail themselves of existing social networks, develop strong ties with key individuals and groups, and use their own network ties as an outside link for the community, enabling them to bring social capital resources into the context of the local situation. However, social capital involves more than just the use of network ties to access personal resources. As noted above, it also has a communal aspect related to trust.

Social Capital and Trust

Much has been written on the subject of trust and social capital (for some key works see Gambetta, 1988; Earle and Cvetkovich, 1995; Fukuyama, 1995; Miztal, 1996; Seligman, 1997; Cook, 2001), but we limit our consideration here to the distinction between generalized trust levels within a society from which individuals benefit and trust in institutions of society and their leaders. Putnam (2000: 137) made this distinction clear. "Trust in other people is logically quite different from trust in institutions and political authorities. One could easily trust one's neighbour and distrust city hall, and vice versa.... Empirically, social [generalized] and political trust may or may not be correlated, but theoretically, they must be kept distinct."

The implication of this for Aboriginal policing is that the police officer is quite clearly the representative and local embodiment of larger police institutions whose past behaviour may have engendered feelings of distrust and even outright hostility in some Aboriginal communities. On the other hand, this same officer, acting as an individual policing official working within the local community, may be able to develop personal, social capital resources to ensure the successful provision of "an appropriate level of service in a manner which is sensitive to the environment and special requirements of Indian communities" (Task Force, 1990: 13). Under such circumstances, building social capital relations of personal (social) trust, distinct from the (dis)trust engendered by one's institutional affiliation, may not be easy, but it is certainly both necessary and possible.

Findings from ongoing research of the lead author of this paper provide insights about how this may be possible. That analysis, based on questionnaire data received from 2,537 respondents in 24 communities along the British Columbia coast, showed clearly that generalized trust and institutional trust are two separate social factors and operate independently of each other (Malinick et al., 2004). The implication of these findings for Aboriginal policing is that an individual police officer need not be bound into any possible lack of trust associated with the institution of which he/she is a part. Rather, the findings suggest that, partly through civic participation and partly through cultural awareness, the police officer can potentially build personal trust by building on the levels of generalized trust that exist in communities. In doing so, the officer may ultimately succeed in overcoming any liability that may accompany policing institutions in Aboriginal communities.

The Role of Cultural Awareness

One further distinction is relevant: the difference between social capital and cultural capital. Whereas there has been consideration of the relationship between social capital and human capital (cf. White et al., 2003: 7-23), there has been little consideration of the role of *culture as capital*, within the context of Aboriginal communities. Cultural capital is simply a predisposition to behave in culturally specific ways "without being in any way the product of obedience to rules" and that can be "orchestrated without being the product of the organizing action of the conductor" (Bourdieu, 1980: 53). When we apply this term to Aboriginal societies, we define cultural capital as sets of *dispositions* that also serve as *structuring* processes. These structuring processes are fundamental to a culture, and underlie ways of thinking and acting. As a result, they predispose the ways through which Aboriginal people relate to their world. Our own research and experience with Aboriginal communities leads us to suggest that members of Aboriginal communities *know* their world through perceptions about their place in time, the need for healing and wellness, their relationship to their environment, and through the importance of culture and tradition. These patterns of awareness often lead to different ways of knowing and experiencing the world that outside policing institutions and imported police officers bring to local situations. Put another way, all Aboriginal policing takes place in cultural settings that vary from community to community (i.e., heterogeneity) in which cultural predispositions formed in history are brought to the relationship between the community and the police.

In the Aboriginal policing context, recognizing these cultural dispositions of Aboriginal communities is important in that they impact on the ability of police officers to understand the context in which policing is understood within the community, and in which Aboriginal community members structure their responses to police authority. These cultural predispositions affect the ability of the officer to form relationships with community members and carry out law enforcement. Merton (1972) discussed the distinction between insider and outsider knowledge, as he made reference to the ability of outsiders to work within environments that require insider knowledge. In the case of First Nations communities, insider knowledge consists, in part, of an understanding of key cultural practices, traditions, and ways of thinking that are exclusive to particular communities and serve to distinguish insiders from outsiders. Thus, local officers must also understand the cultural predispositions of Aboriginal life that have been formed as a result of their contact with non-Aboriginal officials (e.g., within residential schools). Such cultural insider knowledge is not simply knowledge of practices and traditions, but rather what we would describe as *patterns of fundamental predisposition* that shape behaviour and the ways in which Aboriginal peoples understand their relationships with the world and the authorities within it.[1]

In many circumstances where Aboriginal policing takes place, it is therefore quite likely that cultural awareness by police officers can be a necessary precondition for building successful networks, linkages, and partnerships within and outside the community. In that context, cultural capital may be a platform on which social capital building can take place.

As noted earlier, the goal of this paper is to examine the extent to which a social capital perspective, as outlined above, is applicable to understanding the challenges facing Aboriginal policing and to evaluate whether it can serve as a guide for improving Aboriginal policing policy and practice in the future.

Aboriginal policing does not occur in the abstract, but in a variety of specific and complex social situations. To understand the relevance of the social capital perspective to these situations we consider existing literature on Aboriginal policing. That literature makes little or no reference to issues of social capital. Hence, our focus is on considering whether an examination of that literature from a social capital perspective can provide insight and guidelines that would not otherwise be apparent.

Does Social Capital Matter to Aboriginal Policing?

The touchstone for Aboriginal policing policy and programs in Canada is a framework document, *First Nations Policing Policy* (Solicitor General, 1996). To be of value in relation to Aboriginal policing, any analytic perspective must, in some way, contribute to the three goals and objectives of the First Nations policing program as set forth in that document (1996: 3):

- strengthening public security and personal safety;
- increasing responsibility and accountability; and
- building a new partnership.

These goals are the heart of First Nation policing policy in Canada. However, in the policy document in which they are set forth, there is little sustained attempt to provide an analytic framework for how these goals may be best achieved or how progress toward achieving them may be monitored. Of most relevance to this analysis, is that there is also no reference to the role social capital formations might play in achieving these goals or, conversely, in hindering their accomplishment. Yet, social capital is fundamental to each of these goals and an analysis of policing in terms of social capital relations provides a framework for monitoring the extent to which each objective is being achieved. In short, we intend to bring the social capital perspective to the core of the Aboriginal policing mandate.

The first objective, strengthening public security and personal safety, ensures a focus on the right of individuals to feel safe and secure in their homes and out in their communities. This recommendation undoubtedly comes first, because it goes to the heart of the policing function in any community. It requires the police force itself to have the integrity and ability to maintain the fundamental requirements of safety and security.

Robinson (2003: 657) stated there are several aspects of social capital that are important in building safety and security within communities, namely trust, social support, co-operative exchange and group cohesion. These are all group-level outcomes of individual-level social capital, whereby networks are built among individuals. The development of such social capital support networks is essential to the development of effective community policing strategies that are accepted by Aboriginal communities. Conversely, as Pino (2001) demonstrated, a lack of trust between police and citizens impacts negatively on the ability of officers to reduce crime in a community and produce order, by cutting off channels of information and communication.

A second objective of Aboriginal policing is identified as increasing the level of responsibility and accountability of police services with "independence from partisan and inappropriate political influence" (Solicitor General, 1996: 3). This objective expands on the previously discussed objective in that it declares that the policing function while "responsive to their particular need," must not fall victim to factionalism that may exist in Aboriginal bands. Indeed, as our experience with First Nation bands in British Columbia attests, such factionalism (between hereditary and elected chiefs, between families, between clans, between bands within a Nation, and sometimes also between warrior groups) is often so predominant that it sucks up all attention and energy, and may often result in problems of order and unrest.

This goal indirectly goes to the heart of the trust dimension of social capital analysis. It also highlights the difficult social linkage role required of the Aboriginal police officer. On the one hand, an officer must develop social networks of bonding relationships within an Aboriginal community to develop the trust of the local community. On the other hand, officers must do this while always remaining apart from some of the fundamental social network divisions that may well divide that community. This is the dilemma inherent in all policing relationships within any community. However, it is difficult within the confines of small, local communities, such as Indian reserve communities, where the divisions are fundamental to their traditional organization and culture.

While we have suggested that it is important for Aboriginal police officers to develop their own sense of identity and of bonding internal relationships with one another so they are able to function independently within the community, they face the challenge of doing this in a way that doesn't separate the police from the community. Trust, in this context, involves two distinctive dimensions, namely trust in the individual officer built through community involvement and past experience, and trust in the honesty and integrity of the police as a unit. The social capital research we cited earlier suggests that this second type of institutional trust is generally the most difficult to achieve.

The third objective is a somewhat opposite goal to that outlined in objective two. Whereas, there was an explicit directive in objective two to avoid becoming captive to the partisan influences within the local community, objective three requires that the same police officials develop a new partnership with the community. A social capital perspective allows us to see, in somewhat greater relief, the potentially conflicting implications of these two objectives.

Objective three calls for an integrative and bridging set of social network relations that may lead to communities having governance of their own police forces. Consistent with this goal, as Linden and Clairmont (2001: 23) declared, "police services have to become much more responsive and accountable to their First Nations communities." The difficulty, as many First Nation police chiefs emphasized in a survey of their views, is that there is something of an unwillingness of community members to get involved in policing, and this discourages the development of strong police-community partnerships (Clairmont and Murphy, 1998: 39).

This goes to the core difficulty of Aboriginal policing and can be understood in the social capital terms of linkages and trust. Hence, objective three is premised on the view that socially self-sufficient communities with substantial community-based network linkages may potentially engender the levels of trust that will permit police services to be accountable to Aboriginal communities and their leaders. It is also implied that this process will enable police forces to become a vital aspect of the local community's network of social resources. That is, a community capable of being responsible for the governance of its own police force is one where there are strong network linkages between community members as well as between the police and the community.

Finally, we would argue that there is a fourth objective that is basic to First Nation policing, but that is not explicitly included in the objectives set forth in "First Nations Policing Policy" (Solicitor General, 1996: 4). This is the inclusion of culturally sensitive policing, a policing style that can "respond to core areas of Aboriginal culture and identity" (Linden and Clarimont, 2001: 23). As indicated by Perez de Cuellar et al. (1997), "cultural patterns play an irreplaceable role in defining individual and group identity and provide a shared language through which community members of society can communicate on existential issues which are beyond the reach of everyday speech." As such, culture awareness facilitates the building of ties between community members through a common and shared language.

Cultural capital awareness can also increase the capacity of officers to build successful partnerships with community members. One major complaint of Aboriginal community leaders and residents has been that policing has fallen short in providing community-based, problem-solving policing that is culturally sensitive (Linden and Clairmont, 2001: 25). Reports suggest a need to focus on a policing style informed by Native traditions that can be developed and sustained in Indian communities (LaPrairie, 1992; Murphy and Clairmont, 1996: 11). These reports make clear that an awareness of the cultural capital predispositions of Aboriginal communities is critical to effective policing within them. Lack of awareness of these cultural perspectives will lead police officers to ignore them and see them as obstacles to be overcome rather than as predispositions with which to work. When that happens, a conflict between the predispositions of Aboriginal culture and the predispositions of policing culture undermines the development of trust essential to effective Aboriginal policing.

Our analysis, from a social and cultural capital perspective, has permitted us to identify fundamental social conflicts involved in both the role of the Aboriginal police officer within a community and in the way the policing social structures relate to and operate within an Aboriginal community context. These are not necessarily different from the social relational conflicts involving the integration of police in other communities. However, the Aboriginal policing situation, particularly in reserve communities is unique in the strong cultural tradition that must be recognized and incorporated, and the (often culturally empowered) divisions within these communities that must be accommodated within the context of the objectives set forth in the policy. We suggest that these issues are so fundamental to the success of Aboriginal policing, particularly in a reserve community context, that they need a significant level of empirical research and analysis from a social capital perspective to identify the most effective policing processes for dealing with them.

In the following sections, we review a range of research literature related to Aboriginal policing, almost none of which refers to social capital. Yet, these studies and documents contain empirical evidence of the importance of the social capital dimensions previously outlined, and thus of the relevance of social capital to achieving the three policy goals. Indeed, if these goals are to be effectively achieved, it is important to have a consistent analytic framework within which they are understood that provides a road map for achieving them. It is our contention that the social capital framework fulfills these requirements.

The Analysis of Crime Prevention Issues: Community Policing Perspectives

To further demonstrate the relevance of the social capital perspective, it is useful to examine it in the context of two other frameworks found in the analytic literature on Aboriginal policing. These two frameworks were chosen, because they are more comprehensive in their scope than many others. They also differ from other more descriptive works in that they make a greater effort to provide a framework capable of leading to an explanatory and assessment guideline of the situations encountered by Aboriginal police. Given this, we examine them for insights into ways they may complement the social capital perspective that we have been outlining as well as to ascertain how a social capital analysis can add important dimensions to them. We refer to these two perspectives as problem-oriented policing and over- and under-policing.

Problem-Oriented Policing

Benson's (1991) analysis used a perspective he described as problem-oriented policing. Two principles underlie the problem-oriented perspective. First is the belief that crime is not, in and of itself, the fundamental cause of the problem, but is a symptom of more fundamental social problems in the society or community. "The approach is based on the philosophy that incidents of crime are most often symptoms of larger underlying factors and problems. Implementing the approach involves analyzing symptoms of larger underlying factors or problems" (Benson, 1991: 4).

The second principle is that, to understand the underlying problems leading to high crime rates, it is important for policy and community representatives to work together. That is, the framework rests on the assumption that only joint community-police problem solving and jointly formulated solution seeking is likely to be successful in overcoming crime. "Problem oriented policing is an approach whereby the police and the community respond together to crime by addressing the underlying problems or factors which contribute to crime incidents." The goals are identified as being successful in "targeting crime problems, developing solutions and [to] reduce the level of crime using the resources available" (Benson, 1991: 4).

The fundamental assumptions underlying problem-oriented policing are that the social context is a primary incubator of criminal activity. Hence, it is argued, communities should play a significant role in their own policing to unearth these "causes" and rectify the social situations that lead to criminal activity. To this end, a framework begins with identification of the problem, followed by analysis of the problem, formulating a strategic response to the problem, and evaluating that problem.

From a social capital perspective, there is much to support in a perspective that argues that crime has broader social roots and should be understood in that context. However, in Benson's depiction, there is little that would constitute an explanation of what is occurring. Rather, his report sees problems in terms of incidents that can be understood through community-wide discussion aimed at identifying fundamental community problems. While this is very useful, the approach (at least in Benson's depiction) does not go far in examining just how community social structure or the patterns of social relationships within a community can help contribute to the problem or form the basis for its solution.

In contrast, the social and cultural capital approach outlined earlier provides a framework of explanation and analysis of what it is about social contexts that produce social problems. It sees such problems as resulting from various configurations of bonding and bridging relationships, from a breakdown in generalized and institutional trust, and from a lack of access to critical social resources embedded in social networks. Similarly, whereas the problem-oriented approach urges the close co-operation of community and police in making assessments of community-wide problems, the social capital approach provides a framework for assessing the relative strength of that community-police relationship at both the individual and group levels. It also provides a basis for guiding these processes to obtain the appropriate level of co-operation. Most important, the social capital framework provides a conceptual and operational framework to assess the way in which those who are engaged in criminal activity are themselves a unique social network. Hence, it can examine the linkages between individuals engaged in criminal activity.

This latter point highlights the fact that social capital is not always a positive attribute. For example, criminal gangs may be successful, because of the high level of social capital relationships among their members, or because their linkages with outside groups allow them outlets for their criminal activity. A social capital framework can examine the network relationships and linkages that facilitate crime, as well as those that support healthy community integration. In sum, the social capital perspective can be employed as a guideline for fact finding and as a framework for assessment. We see the social capital and cultural capital frameworks as being compatible with the problem-oriented approach but, at the same time, providing concepts that enable an explanatory analysis and assessment that is only partly available within the problem-oriented perspective.

Over- and Under-Policing

The second work to which we give close attention is Samuelson (1993). Perhaps more than any other work reviewed by us, Samuelson provided an explanatory and analytic framework for analyzing Aboriginal policing in Canada. In particular, Samuelson made an important distinction between the over-policing of visible Aboriginal people in urban areas in terms of arrests, charging practices, and treatment, and the under-policing of less visible violence against Aboriginal people, especially Aboriginal women (1993: 22), particularly those living in rural areas. This over-policing and under-policing distinction highlights some of the most important social dynamics with respect to Aboriginal policing in Canada.

As noted above, Aboriginal persons, when compared to the rest of Canadian society, are over-policed, at least to the extent that a far greater proportion appear before courts and in prisons. Moreover, this over-policing falls disproportionately on youth. That is, youths are far more likely to experience the impact of policing than are the rest of Aboriginal communities and of Canadian society. Given this, any attempt to try to improve Aboriginal policing should focus on those parts of the Aboriginal population most affected, and on the relationship of the police to them. That is, there is an urgent necessity to focus on Aboriginal youth and their relationship with the police.

It is at this point that the strength of the social capital perspective is most apparent. Presumably, a problem-oriented perspective would focus on the perceived problems in a community that lead to high crime rates among juveniles. Such a question leads, by necessity, to a focus on the negative aspects of community life, such as broken homes and lone-parent families. A social capital focus could be used to examine a whole range of other situations in which there were social network ties that also worked to support youth to avoid criminal activities. This could provide a richer understanding of the various roles played by youth peer networks and not simply those that bind youth in sub-cultures that contribute to criminal behaviour. Furthermore, with its focus on resources accessible through social network ties, a social capital perspective might also examine the way in which local police officials operated within the community, both with youth and others persons, so as to become a resource the community would trust and call upon when confronted with juvenile behaviour problems.

It is also important to note that, in this respect, the social capital perspective is able to operate both as an analytic tool and a framework setting out directions for remedial action. Hence, the social capital framework can be particularly useful in providing an assessment of the way in which social capital relationships (i.e., social networks, bridging and bonding linkages, trust, etc.) are operating with respect to youth within Aboriginal communities.

This basic research is not simply an academic exercise, but rather the background for understanding the difficulties facing Aboriginal youth who now make up about half the Aboriginal population in Canada. We emphasize that a social capital analysis of their situations is critical to understanding their problems and developing a framework of policy and programs necessary to provide trusted social network relationships that bind Aboriginal youth into a supportive community environment. Likewise, a focus on the way in which policing officials may make meaningful social network linkages to, and build trust with, Aboriginal youth is also of enormous urgency, if we are to deal effectively deal with this growing segment of the Aboriginal population.

The other dimension identified by Samuelson of relevance here is his suggestion that there is also systematic under-policing with respect to community violence, particularly violence against women. While Aboriginal youth become disproportionately identified as perpetrators of crime, Samuelson argued that Aboriginal women are disproportionately the victim of crimes and, frequently, of crimes that go unreported to policing officials. Again, the focus in this analysis on building social ties and trust is particularly relevant here. If Samuelson's analysis is correct, than policing officials need to make a concerted effort to develop community-based personal linkages with Aboriginal community leaders, specifically, with those whose possible victimization is most likely to go unreported, namely women. Ways in which this can be done are discussed below, with particular reference to restorative justice practices already in place in some Aboriginal communities throughout Canada.

Social Capital in the Policing Literature

In reviewing works on policing relevant to Aboriginal policing, we found two categories: those that deal with the influence of the community on crime, and those that focus more specifically on the role of police and of policing, albeit in a community context. That is, while both sets of studies focus on the nature of community policing, the former tends to focus on the role of the community, and the latter focuses on the role of the police. From a social capital perspective, both dimensions are important to consider, given that social capital must exist between community members as well as between communities and police for it to impact crime prevention initiatives.

Unfortunately, few studies of either type make much mention of social capital. Those studies, examined below, that do use a social capital lens, all do so within the context of urban community issues.

The Influence of Community Social Capital on Criminal Activity

Coyne's (2004) study of social capital as it relates to community involvement in policing is indicative of a number of studies. Basically, she argued (though didn't test) that the quality and quantity of community social ties plays a significant role in crime prevention. She suggested that increased levels of social capital in at-risk neighbourhoods directly increase the ability of residents to transform their communities. Several other studies support this thinking, referring particularly to the link between increased rates of social capital and significantly lower crime rates (Faulkner, 2003; Halpern, 2001; Kawachi et al., 1999; Sampson et al., 1997).

As an example, Faulkner (2003) discussed the role of community social capital in the reduction of crime, demonstrating that when citizens have access to large quantities of social capital harnessed at the community level, a reduction in crime rates occurs along with the promotion of socially acceptable behaviour and social well-being. Faulkner noted that the role of social capital relations is particularly important as the policing and criminal justice system is limited in what it can do. Thus, from Faulkner's viewpoint, social capital (at least in positive forms) can serve as a community-based supplement to a police presence in terms of its role in preventing crime. Of course, social capital can also have a negative role when it bonds criminals together against the larger community and those responsible for providing policing activities within them. Kawachi et al. (1999) measured the relationship between violent and property crimes, and found that increased levels of social capital are correlated with reduced crime rates in both. That is, even when the types of crime are divided into distinct categories, a relationship empirically exists between social capital and crime rates for both crimes against persons and property crimes.

Rountree and Warner (1999) found that the gendered nature of social ties is also an important characteristic related to crime rates. While female social ties are more effective in controlling and decreasing crime rates, diverse male social ties do not correlate highly at all. These findings would seem to suggest that a focus on gendered social relations and the social capital resources and trust they differently generate, may be particularly important for effective policing.

Despite some contradictory findings, these studies establish empirically that social capital is related in fundamental ways to levels of crime, crime prevention, and solidarity in communities. They also provide evidence that it is important to examine the types of social capital as they appear to be differently used in relation to different types of criminal activity. These findings, coupled with the dearth of research into the relationship between social capital, criminal activity, and policing in Aboriginal communities, cry out for an empirical study of the patterns of association between social capital and crime in Aboriginal communities.

It is also important to note that developing social capital relations does not necessarily guarantee that the outcomes of policing will all be positive (Faulkner, 2003; Pino, 2001). In a situation described by Pino (2001), ties were created and sustained between community members through the actions of community policing, but did not extend to the officers in charge of the community policing program. Community members were able to communicate with each other better than before about issues that involved policy activities in their community (i.e., bonding social capital), in some ways effectively policing their own communities. Actual policing activities involving community police officers remained impaired by a lack of trust resulting primarily from their increasing lack of participation in the community (i.e., bridging social capital).

In this particular instance, building and maintaining social capital among community members and among police officers themselves did not extend to integrating the police officers into the community. This situation, as described by Pino, can be explained in part with reference to the discussion raised earlier about the difference between generalized and institutional trust. We noted empirical evidence that the two are not linked. Thus, it is important for the Aboriginal police officer to build her/his own social network relationships within the community and, in doing so, build personal trust relationships. It is considerably more difficult to rectify the institutional distrust of police agencies in Aboriginal communities that has built up over the years. As institutional and personal social capitals are not necessarily linked, institutional distrust may be overcome at the level of the individual officer's relationships with the community.

Social Capital and Policing in the Community

While community policing is not entirely the same as Aboriginal policing, there are obvious similarities, particularly when Aboriginal policing occurs in community settings, such as on Indian reserves. In the context of this paper, it is a particularly good example of how policing practices are amenable to discussion and analysis using social capital as a framework. Of particular note is that two reports by senior criminologists in Canada on Aboriginal policing have called for the inclusion of community policing practices (Murphy and Clairmont, 1996; Clairmont and Murphy, 2001). The reasons given by them for this call to focus on community policing relate primarily to the need to form social networks and strong interpersonal linkages between Aboriginal police forces and Aboriginal communities. For example, they emphasize the importance of having police officers "working closely with local agencies, emphasizing peacekeeping and informal solutions" (Clairmont and Murphy, 2001: 31). Hence, as we see it, the call for a community policing perspective is, at its heart, a call for a focus on issues and social processes at the centre of social capital formation and analysis. Given this, a brief review of the literature on the relationship between community policing and social capital is useful in highlighting the potential of a social capital framework in the context of Aboriginal policing practices.

There are two ways in which social capital is discussed within the context of community policing. One perspective focuses on the need for stronger bridging ties between officers and community members. The other tends to emphasize the importance of building strong bonding social capital linkages within the police community itself, particularly in terms of developing strong bonding ties to other officers and supervisors.

Looking at the first of these approaches, the philosophy behind community policing encourages the formation of partnerships between police and community members. These are seen as a way of fostering joint problem-solving opportunities that will increase the sense of security and safety in a community and aid the police in their efforts to decrease levels of crime (Graycar, 1999). The police should "maintain constant contact and cooperation with the citizenry, work with other public and private sector organizations and continually evaluate strategies and community relations. None of this can work properly without building social capital within and among citizenry, the police and other public and private sector organizations" (Pino, 2001: 200).

As we have repeatedly pointed out, statements of this kind directly advocate a focus on the dimensions of community social life that are the focus of social capital analysis. However, they do so without adequately addressing why such activities are desirable and successful, and without providing much of a framework to assess how successful such activities are in achieving their goals. As we have repeatedly stressed, social capital analysis provides a framework of concepts, methods, and analysis to assess such relationships.

In this context, we suggest that a social capital approach has two major advantages. First at a research and policy review level, it provides an analytic framework that enables analysis to go beyond descriptive observations to employ a more systematic methodology. However, it can also be seen as having a more practical advantage. A focus on increasing the personal social capital of police officers can lead to increased contact and participation and better communication between community members and the police. Ample empirical evidence supports our contention that social capital-enhancing relationships leading to civic engagement are critically important in society (cf. Putman, 2000). The community policing perspective essentially maintains that this level of social engagement by policing officials is also of critical importance.

Many statements in previous reports relating to Aboriginal policing describe the need for partnership building between Aboriginal police officers and various community members and institutions. In this context, the distinction between bonding, bridging, and linking social capital is important as it identifies the different types of partnerships that can be created in a community. We suggest that bridging and linking social capital are the forms most relevant to creating police-community partnerships with individuals as well as various institutions. Bonding social capital, while relevant to policing efforts, can be conceptualized best as ties between individual officers that foster support networks within the police force itself. While examples within the literature emphasize the importance of bonding networks to partnerships in policing units (e.g., Robinson, 2003), our focus is on the role of Aboriginal policing within a community context, and that literature will not be covered in this article.

Numerous sources provide commentary on how bridging and linkage social capital should be fostered in communities between police and various community actors, even if they do not identify the required social processes directly in those terms. Some of these call for communities and police to combine their resources to achieve greater effectiveness. The "need to establish and maintain strong and effective relationships between police and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people at the local level is considered major priority for the community policing by the Service" (Tyler and Jeans, 1993: 59). "Underlying assumptions are that crime derives in part from social conditions and relationships in communities and that the partnerships between community organizations, citizens and justice agencies are essential components for dealing with crime" (Marshall, 1998).

Likewise, other reports stress the importance of joint priority setting by community leaders and police officials, and emphasize the need for police to be involved in the everyday social life of communities.

> Community members who receive police services should help set policing priorities and influence the policies of police departments. The police should not just have a one-way relationship with their communities ... [they] must develop institutionalized ways of consulting with their communities and they should actually listen to what the community has to say (Linden and Clairmont, 2001: 32).
>
> While aboriginal police and their communities will agree that they must have an active and broad relationship with the community, there is less agreement on how this relationship can be best maintained, monitored and made accountable. The proposed, broadly defined, community-involved police role means that inevitably the police will be more involved in the everyday social and political life of the community (Linden and Clairmont, 2001: 41).

Throughout all this, the importance of police visibility within Aboriginal communities is highlighted. "As in many other First Nations communities, the informants did contend that the TPS (Timiskaming Police Service) should do more in terms of community-based, preventative policing, and walk and bicycle more instead of doing car patrols" (Clairmont, 2002: 19).

However, before we conclude this review of the literature on social capital and policing, a cautionary note is in order. The "First Nations Policing Policy" document (Solicitor General, 1996: 4) stated that "First Nation communities should be policed by such numbers of persons with similar cultural and linguistic background as are necessary to ensure that police services will be effective and responsive to First Nations cultures and particular policing needs." However, the literature on social capital and community policing identifies some negative effects of local residents who police in their home communities. Negative community pressure may hinder the ability of officers to police these communities effectively. Thus, "some officers find it stressful to police in communities where they are deeply embedded in the kinship system and where these ties continue to generate deep, personal commitment" (Linden and Clairmont, 2001: 24). Similarly, being a local community member may mean that an Aboriginal police officer has a level of local social and cultural capital that may produce an unintended or opposite outcome – the officer might, quite literally, "go native." Thus, it should be emphasized that having a similar cultural and linguistic background does not necessarily mean that the officer must be of the same community. More important is an awareness of the cultural capital issues, and of the need to develop social capital ties.

Finally, as further evidence that community policing is not an unqualified benefit, a paper by Klinenberg (2001) provided some clarification about its unintended consequences. In "Bowling Alone, Policing Together," which parodies Putnam's *Bowling Alone*, Klinenberg argued that in the United States there are two contradictory desires. On the one hand, there is a desire for collective belonging, while on the other, there is a desire for private security. Klinenberg contended that community policing essentially corrupts the balance between the two dimensions so the dimension of community building has been placed in the hands of police officials whose primary focus is on order. As he described it, community policing has been an amorphous but unfocused program that has seen much of the social service funding transferred from community support workers to "police officers and administrators [who] have little interest in performing the social services and community-support tasks that communities need" (p. 80). Klinenberg concluded that "the elevation of policing into a mode of social integration marks a disturbing trend toward a society where distrust, suspicion, and fear are organizing principles of politics and culture" (p. 80).

In sum, while there is a call in the Aboriginal policing literature for community policing, this should not be taken to mean that policing officials should take on the social roles of other community relation specialists. Should that happen, there is likely to be a net loss of trusting social network relationships within the Aboriginal community. Simply put, stability is no substitute for the trust engendered through a strong level of community-wide involvement and a thick network of bonding and bridging ties.

Infrastructure and Partnership Strategies for Social Capital Formation

If the formation of social capital relationships within Aboriginal communities and between these communities and policing officials is of critical importance, then it is also important to examine how such social capital can best be created. The statements above document that a focus on community partnerships has been a significant recommendation of Aboriginal policing analysts for at least 16 years. However, while we are able to provide numerous examples calling on Aboriginal communities and policing agencies to develop social capital in the form of partnerships, there are no clear cut solutions documented on how to do this. No reports exist that provide a clear strategy or study of how social capital can be developed, maintained, and used by the police in an Aboriginal context. We see this as an important and pressing call for research. We need to conduct studies detailing how to create favourable conditions for the development and mobilization of social capital in Aboriginal communities and the role police can play in this process.

Hints in other literature talk about how to foster community participation in community policing and restorative justice initiatives. These studies also emphasize the need to form partnerships and harness community networks in justice initiatives. Hence, the recommendations found in the literature on restorative justice initiatives may be reviewed for suggestions of the types of practices that have worked in that context and that also may have relevance for Aboriginal policing more generally. As a caveat, we warn that we do not state that the findings of this comparative analysis should be adopted without careful research into the Canadian Aboriginal context. However, we do suggest that these be given cautious consideration, perhaps tailoring strategies to fit what has already been done in particular Aboriginal communities. Once again, research is necessary before any conclusions can be made about the value of one strategy over another in the development of social capital within Aboriginal communities.

The literature related to restorative justice can be summarized around two categories of strategy that are necessary prerequisites to effective justice programs: infrastructure-building strategies and community partnership-building strategies.

Studies clearly indicate that communities with high levels of poverty, alcohol, and drug abuse, with low education and employment levels also have low levels of social capital and high rates of crime (Carcach and Huntley, 2002; LaPrairie, 1995). Thus, infrastructure building strategies are designed to address what are seen as preconditions for the types of social capital development that culminate in crime prevention. That is, before attempting to significantly undertake the social dynamics of implementing community-building strategies, infrastructure must be in place to deal with the many social problems that exist in Aboriginal communities. However, it should be noted that, in the context used here, infrastructure does not refer to the provision of capital projects. Rather, it means, primarily the development of programs at the community level that directly deal with the fundamental social and economic problems of Aboriginal communities. Without first aiming directly at some of these problem dimensions of Aboriginal community life, any attempt to directly create social capital development will, of necessity, be hampered.

Infrastructure Building Strategies

Several infrastructure-building strategies requiring government support are suggested within various reports and articles. These include the creation of job-mentoring programs (Estens, 2001); job training, education opportunities, and long-term employment (LaPrairie, 1995; Yeager, 1993); and the development of community services and resources for poor, lone-parent families (LaPrairie, 2002). Such strategies may also include drug, alcohol, and gambling treatment centres on site, although this is an extension of the arguments presented above. These may involve police officers, but recommendations typically suggest that government support comes through monetary funds, forming a partnership with the community. This kind of partnership allows the community to become involved and somewhat responsible for its own development.

By strengthening the community at its roots, governments can provide stability with tools, such as education, employment, and substance abuse counselling. These reports suggest that the above mechanisms must be in place before there can be significant social capital gains. For example, LaPrairie (2002: 201) stated that "individual social capital can be enhanced through such initiatives" and further that it is the "social and economic organization and related structures of advantage or disadvantage that affect people's lives and dictate crime and disorder." By creating relative advantage in Aboriginal communities with respect to infrastructure, the capacity for enhanced social capital can be created. In addition, Yeager (1993) stated that "until the larger arms of government support these initiatives on bigger fronts, such as job training and education, [justice] alternatives will see relatively moderate success." These alternatives include restorative justice practices and sentencing circles that draw on the collective social capital to integrate the community in issues of justice and intervention.

Community Partnership Strategies

After meeting infrastructure-building strategies of Aboriginal communities, community partnership-building strategies can then be put in place. The most general strategy that frames all the recommendations is a constant agreement that communities themselves must participate in any justice initiatives, thus putting the responsibility back in the hands of individual community members and increasing community participation in alternative adjudication processes, such as the implementation of sentencing circles (LaPrairie, 1998). LaPrairie (1998) also suggested that community involvement can come in the form of alternatives to formal sentencing, such as diversion, mediation, and arbitration practices. These strategies can build social capital or harness pre-existing social capital by fostering bonding ties between community members and bridging ties with representatives of the justice system.

In particular, restorative justice initiatives, such as just outlined, are seen as highly appropriate examples of ways to address youth crime. From our perspective, such efforts likely succeed in large part when, bonding, bridging, and linkage social capital are fostered among the offender, the victim, and other community partners (Bazemore, 2001).

> Social relationships smooth the way for the development of additional connections between the offender, law-abiding citizens, and legitimate institutions. As the number and strength of such relationships increase, and as these relationships provide additional access to legitimate roles for more youths at risk, they in turn build social capital in neighborhood networks (Bazemore, 2001: 220).

Hence, we can take this example and extrapolate it to a broader Aboriginal context by suggesting that these same processes would occur if they were fostered as ways of involving communities in the creation of their own crime prevention initiatives.

The police can also play a role in the development of community partnerships and networks. As one study of urban community policing suggests, collective social capacity is greatest in communities where the police are perceived to be more accessible (Scott, 2002: 161). These studies argue that police officers generate "cohesion, trust, and efficacy within neighborhoods by making themselves more accessible to residents," which includes "opening channels of communication, appearing responsive to citizen concerns and taking active steps to make themselves available to residents" (Scott, 2002: 161). This may seem like a small step. However, in the context of the lack of trust between the police and Aboriginal communities, simply changing the way officers act toward residents may go a long way to improving relations and generating interest in community safety and crime prevention. It will also provide necessary conditions for building bridging social capital between residents and the police.

A report on Aboriginal police relations in Queensland, Australia (Tyler and Jeans, 1993) echoed the preceding comments about the need for increased communication between officers and Aboriginal peoples. It provided a useful guide of 10 steps to effective communication. "Be aware; be honest and open; listen to what is being said; respect each other's point of view; do not ridicule a speaker; do not talk down to anyone; consul; be patient; share ideas, knowledge opinions and viewpoints; and, trust and respect each other" (Tyler and Jeans, 1993: 62). Again, such comments echo those concerning the importance of communication in community policing that were highlighted in the previous section. They underscore that communication is an important and necessary component for building trust while allowing police officers to integrate in their communities. Thus, it is a very important first step to the creation of community-police social capital relations.

Noticeable from these recommendations is that there are no easy answers to creating the necessary conditions for the development of social capital. Instead, we have provided some of the suggested guidelines outlined in other works. It should be clear from these that both infrastructure requirements and community partnership requirements must be addressed and can be seen as necessary requirements for social capital to develop as an effective aspect of Aboriginal policing. Where such infrastructure is strong, Aboriginal communities will be better able to develop social capital and participate in crime prevention and justice alternative initiatives.

We would contend then that the social capital perspective as we have presented it here provides the framework that can explain the relative advantage of community partnerships, the strategies that need to be taken to bring them about, and the potential pitfalls involved in the process of establishing them. In short, we believe the time for invocation has ended, and the social capital perspective can provide both an analytic guide to how to move forward with respect to community policing as well as a complementary analytical tool of the relative success or failures of various partnership strategies in increasing the levels of social capital and trust within Aboriginal communities.

Conclusion

We have provided a relatively comprehensive analysis of a whole range of research and policy literature, from Canada and elsewhere, that deals with a complex array of issues related to Aboriginal policing. Our aim was to assess the relevance of the social capital framework of concepts and analysis to the issues identified as relevant to community-based Aboriginal policing, and to Aboriginal policing more generally. As anticipated, we have been able to identify many ways that social capital issues are relevant to Aboriginal policing and in which the framework of concepts related to social capital can provide an analytic, rather than just a descriptive, assessment of the outcomes of policing in Aboriginal communities.

As we reflect back on the observations that come out of our analysis, we note, in particular, the following insights.

- Social capital relations are at the core of the three goals and objectives identified as the basis of Aboriginal policing policies and programs in Canada.
- A social capital perspective helps, in particular, to highlight some of the conflicting requirements of the goals and objectives of Aboriginal policing.
- A social capital perspective provides a tool, and ultimately a template, that can assist those involved in Aboriginal policing. It does this primarily by identifying the relationships at both a community and individual level operating as both bonding and bridging resources for community members and policing officials.
- A social capital perspective highlights the importance of developing trusting personal relationships between policing officials and community members. In particular, it distinguishes between individual trust and interpersonal trust, and suggests that the appropriate involvement in the community activities when coupled with cultural awareness by individual police officers, can potentially offset levels of distrust in police organizations and in broader policing processes routed in past historical experiences.
- A social capital perspective seems to be particularly relevant in dealing with some of the areas of greatest concern with respect to existing policing activity. Thus, a focus on social capital relations may be a useful tool in understanding (and ultimately altering) those social processes that lead to high levels of juvenile offenders, and at the same time can provide guidance in how to develop the social support networks necessary to reduce violence against women.
- In particular, a social capital framework can provide guidance for police officers with respect to engaging in activities that provide both a direct role (through engaging in effective partnerships), and an indirect role (as community liaison with broader policing processes and organizational structures). Both roles are critical contributors to effective policing.

These observations speak to the manner in which a social capital perspective may be particularly useful in both the analysis of Aboriginal policing activities and in providing guidelines for policy development. However, besides demonstrating that a social capital perspective is of particular relevance to an analysis of Aboriginal policing, this paper has also provided insight into the multifaceted nature of social capital analysis itself.

- **The social capital perspective has explanatory power.** Social capital, as a framework of analysis, has explanatory power. That is, it is a comprehensive, empirically well developed, and relatively well documented set of concepts and empirical indicators. These have been shown repeatedly, in a wide range of situations, to be able to explain social relations at both the individual and societal levels. By demonstrating repeatedly that virtually every aspect of Aboriginal policing embodies social capital-related considerations, we have established that the application of a social capital perspective is of relevance to understanding Aboriginal policing in that it can help explain the processes involved in almost all aspects of the Aboriginal policing context.

- **Social capital has social power. It has social consequences, and these consequences are real.** In stating that social capital is real and has consequences, we emphasize that social capital doesn't exist at the level of a conceptual framework, but that social capital is out there, in society. Its consequences are real in the sense that those who have access to social capital linkages do have access to resources that can assist them. We have also shown, with respect to Aboriginal policing, that the social level of social capital related to trust, reciprocity, and even cultural predispositions is likely to have such social power. Communities embodied with high levels of trust, and trusting social relationships, are likely to have less need for policing and are more likely to provide the contexts in which Aboriginal policing can be effective.
- **The social capital framework is a policy perspective and has policy implications.** It is important that social capital considerations become more systematically integrated into a policy approach to Aboriginal policing. That is, armed with knowledge about how social capital works generally, it is important to frame Aboriginal policing policies in terms of attempting to produce positive social capital outcomes that will likely, in turn, lead to positive policing outcomes.

Such policies need to work on a variety of levels. For example, there should be a policy goal to increase in Aboriginal communities, those types of social capital relationships that provide resources both for community members and police officers in their effort to achieve the objectives of the Aboriginal policing policy. In this respect a social capital lens is a particularly useful tool for assessing the way in which existing social relationships support the types of reciprocity, social support, and trust formation essential to achieving these objectives. Thus, a social capital framework of analysis may serve as the basis for "getting a reading" on the way interventions by police officers can be effective in achieving their objectives. This might entail efforts to ensure that police officers are trained in an understanding of the roles that social capital/social networks play in effective policing, and of their responsibility as individuals to become involved in positive social capital types of relationships within the communities in which they work.

In sum, an awareness of the influence of social capital and of its consequences could allow Aboriginal policy to be framed in terms of producing positive social capital outcomes as these will, in turn likely lead to more positive policing outcomes.

- **The social capital approach can be used as an evaluation and monitoring tool.** Consistent with the point just outlined, a social capital lens can be used as a tool to assess and measure the level of social integration and change in communities, the success of police officers in enabling/building on existing social networks to perform their work more effectively and a wide range of other dimensions. That is, the social capital framework can serve as a guide of what exists within the context of an Aboriginal community and provide an evaluation framework to assess the dynamic changes taking place in Aboriginal communities of particular relevance to policing activities.
- **Integrating social capital into the policy research framework.** Finally, we believe it deserves mentioning that, all the points made above rest on the fact that the social capital perspective is a research approach that can provide both basic and applied information of considerable value to the planning and evaluation of Aboriginal policing in Canada. An ongoing basic and policy research perspective incorporating a social capital analysis is fundamental to understanding the social dynamics affecting policing in Canada, as well as the dynamics of the policing process itself.

Notes

1 Chief Anfinn Siwallace has given his permission to use this quote in this paper.

2 The use of the terms Aboriginal, First Nation and Indian is fraught with some difficulty in Canada. The term "Aboriginal" is generally used to refer to the descendents of all the people who inhabited the territory of Canada before the arrival of European settlers. It includes those of Indian descent and those of Inuu descent, and may also be used by some M_tis persons. In western Canada, the preferred title tends to be First Nation persons, reflecting the political status of such persons and that their ancestors never signed treaty agreements giving up political rights or rights to ownership of traditional lands. The more general term used

throughout Canada to describe the descendents of the original inhabitants who are of non-Inuit descent, is Indian. However, this term has connotation of unpleasant colonialist labelling. We generally use the term "Aboriginal" throughout this paper as the most generic (and perhaps least offensive) of the three terms. We occasionally use the term Indian when the material we are reviewing and/or the analysis we are making, is limited to Indian reservation band communities.

3 Whether the dimensions of trust, co-operation and reciprocity are aspects of social capital or may be seen as important determinants (preconditions) or even outputs of social capital, is a much debated academic question. We need not dwell on the implications of that issue here. Rather, we would note that trust is an important precondition for the formation of social capital relations within an Aboriginal policing context.

4 By this, we mean that patterns of knowing the world are fundamental to Aboriginal ways of responding to and dealing with it. These understandings are often so fundamental to the value structure and intellectual *mazeways* (Wallace, 1968) of Aboriginal people that they, themselves, may not fully be cognizant about the impact that these "ways of knowing" have on their "ways of acting" in the world. Of course, in this respect, they are no different from other people (including police officers) who take their cultural *dispositions* more or less for granted.

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Commentary on "Understanding Aboriginal Policing in a Social Capital Context"

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The study "Understanding Aboriginal Policing in a Social Capital Context" by Ralph Matthews and Rochelle Côté does an excellent job of discussing the opportunities and challenges associated with analyzing the complex issue of policing Aboriginal communities within a social capital framework. A detailed discussion of the direct and indirect impacts social capital has on corrections and policing provides the reader with a new perspective from which to address the social, economic, and criminal issues that plague First Nations communities. While shedding light on the importance of recognizing that social capital can either be enhanced by public safety, or enhance public safety, this study serves as a foundation and impetus for future research on Aboriginal policing, social capital in Aboriginal communities, and community policing.

The authors effectively expanded the definition of social capital to include all social networks that assist individuals in accessing resources as well as the collective assets that are characteristic of some communities and not others. These collective assets refer to the trust, social support systems, and reciprocity that are often defining characteristics of First Nations communities. As well, trust, social support systems, and reciprocity strengthen public safety and security, supporting the mandate of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness Canada (PSEPC) and the First Nations Policing Policy (FNPP). To enhance effectively the safety and security in Aboriginal communities, in a culturally appropriate fashion, PSEPC must continue to build trust and relationships within these communities, and continue to be mindful of how these efforts may be better linked to other programs and services available in First Nations communities.

Effective First Nations policing, and associated policies, may only be developed in consultation with those communities, and their governance structures. A growing recognition exists that policing does not begin and end with hard policing (e.g., investigations, arrest), but that soft policing, under the broad notion of community policing, is also required to facilitate the trust needed for hard policing, and prevent crime through enhancing community networks and resources. By encouraging the development of new partnerships, social capital provides communities with the basis for encouraging community participation, thereby implementing a community-based approach to policing and exploiting diversionary measures from the traditional criminal justice system, such as available restorative justice initiatives. These initiatives continue to be relevant, as Aboriginal people in Canada remain disproportionately over represented in our criminal justice system.

An examination of the social capital that exists within these communities would serve as a starting point for considering future directions associated with community partnership and to inform discussions of policing models in these communities, including community policing approaches. Future studies may shed light on the extent to which increasing social capital in First Nations communities has an effect on the public safety and security in a community.

Overall, this paper serves to underline a growing recognition that effective policing in Aboriginal communities begins with, and relies on, the existence of social capital in the form of social networks, and the trust of community members, both of which are central considerations of the work of PSEPC in administering the FNPP.

NETWORKS OF COMMUNITY ASSOCIATIONS AND COLLECTIVE SOCIAL CAPITAL: A REVIEW OF ANALYSES AND EXPERIENCES

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The vitality of Canadians' civic involvement is well established. When problems arise in their communities, Canadians are quick to take action and devote time and resources to resolve these problems, and to voice their opinions about the type of development they want for their communities. Sometimes, however, the challenges are so great that alliances need to be forged that ultimately lead to the creation of group networks better able to respond to the issues in question. In what context do such networks emerge? What conditions are required for these networks to attain their goals and, above all, to mobilize and produce social capital? What forms of social capital are generated by these group collaborations? These are the questions addressed in this paper. Part 1 presents the analytical framework, research methodology, and the steps followed to select various experiences of group networks. Part 2 presents six case studies, with a detailed analysis provided in the appendix. Part 3 provides a summary of the conclusions from all the experiences studied. In the last part, some possibilities for public action, particularly by the federal government, are suggested.

Analysis of Social Capital in Group Networks

The concept of social capital has perhaps become a victim of its own sudden popularity in scientific and political circles, and of the lack of any clear effort to place it in a proper context of theoretical and scientific approaches (more sociological than economic) that have, over the last several decades, advanced the discussion on various concepts related to social capital, namely, trust, norms and values, social networks, and mobilization of resources (Charbonneau, 2004; Portes, 1998). Generally, all these elements tend to be treated as an indistinct whole. We agree with Paxton (2002), however, that each of these concepts can be useful when analyzing social capital, but should be addressed separately, and at different points in the analysis, which is the approach employed here.

For the purposes of this paper, we have defined social capital as the resources mobilized and produced by individuals and communities, and derived from social relations, to attain their goals. This definition implies three distinct dimensions of social capital: the conditions necessary for the production of social capital, social networks, and the resources mobilized and produced. Each dimension is briefly addressed.

The Conditions Necessary for the Production of Social Capital

The first dimension pertains to the conditions necessary for the production and mobilization of potential resources within groups and communities (Charbonneau and Turcotte, 2002; Giddens, 2000). The most commonly mentioned elements here are trust and shared norms and values (Coleman, 1988; Fukuyama, 1995; Paxton, 2002). Since social capital derives from social relations, it is important to take into account the conditions that promote or impede the establishment of relations and the mobilization of resources. Building ties and circulating resources are impossible in the absence of trust and shared norms and values. The debate becomes confused when these conditions are presented as social capital. This misunderstanding is related, in part, to the fact that, over time, the dynamic of interaction that characterizes social relations is likely to create and strengthen trust (as well as shared norms and values). The condition for interaction thus becomes the product of interaction, which some have criticized as a circular argument (Portes, 1998; Lévesque and White, 2001; Mayer, 2003). This criticism may or may not be justified, but, if nothing else, it demonstrates the difficulty in accepting the fact that the "social" is both complex (Adam and Rončević, 2003) and dynamic.

In our view, while these conditions may be essential for the production of social capital, they are not resources and should not be defined in these necessarily instrumental terms that presuppose a precise end and objectives to be attained, as specified in our definition of social capital. Putnam (2000) clearly stated that ties of trust and shared norms lead to more effective joint action in attaining a common good; however, this does not immediately presuppose an instrumental interpretation of trust or social norms. To understand this logic, we must abandon a utilitarian approach to social ties, which, ultimately, runs the risk of threatening the very existence of trust and shared norms and values (Adam and Rončević, 2003; Mayer, 2003). To move the discussion forward, we suggest another approach based on the fact that learning trust and social norms, and developing an identity (which allows each individual to place himself or herself in relation to the values present in society) serve first and foremost to construct the "social individual," an individual who is able to live in a community, create social ties and, possibly, exchange resources. This learning occurs during the process of socialization, first within the family, then through multiple interactions within the framework of other institutions that define society, such as school and work (Charbonneau and Turcotte, 2002).

Social Networks: Analyzing Social Capital from an Interactionist Perspective

The second dimension of social capital refers to social networks. If human capital refers to the sum of "personal" resources that belong to each individual (education, income, property, skills, etc.), thinking in terms of social capital leads to an interactionist perspective and an examination of how engaging in social relations with others provides access to their resources. Access to the "other" is, in itself, a precondition to access to the other's resources.[1] However, do "others" (individuals or groups) constitute "social capital" in and of themselves? This brings us to the very heart of a second misunderstanding in which the holders of potential resources are confused with the resources themselves (Portes, 1998).[2] In the analyses of social networks, a distinction is made – and this is generally of interest to a variety of researchers – between research that focuses on the structure of networks and research that studies the dynamics of how resources are circulated within networks (information, support, etc.). In the latter studies, there is also a conflict between instrumental theory and social ties theory.[3]

Analyses of networks and social capital focus on different scales, or levels, of ties. At the first level (the subject of most analyses), one can study personal networks, that is, the relational fabric that individuals weave over their lifetime in their direct interactions with other individuals, be it to define oneself as a social individual (from a social ties perspective) or to access another's resources in order to attain personal goals (from a utilitarian perspective).[4] At the second level, the question is no longer which social capital is available and used to attain personal goals, but rather how individuals, members of a community, offer their own resources for the well-being of the community (Glaser et al., 2001; Paxton, 2002; La Due Lake and Huckfeldt, 1998). In a donation context (Godbout, 2000), the perspective shifts from the "receiving" individual to the "giving" citizen.[5] Indeed, Putnam's analysis of the impact of the decline of civic participation in our societies is based on relations between the individual and the community rather than the relations between individuals.

In this study, we use a third and, in our view, more "political" level of analysis (Adam and Rončević, 2003), namely, relations between groups (Frank and Yasumoto, 1998; Paxton, 2002; Scott, 1991). Our first observation is that these groups exist in our society as voluntary associations that bring together active citizens (Charbonneau, 2004; Curtis et al., 2003). We also note that over their lifespan, these groups build their own networks of relations with other groups. Our analysis, therefore, operates at the level of aggregates of groups,[6] hence our use of the term "group network."

Our analysis addresses the following questions.

- What forms do these group networks take?
- Do they produce social capital? What kind?
- What are the conditions under which these networks emerge and produce social capital?

Answering the first question requires a structural analysis of social networks. We present a portrait of these networks by examining the way member groups name them (see inset). These terms describe types of ties, rather than types of groups – a clear indicator that they are, indeed, networks. Compared to personal networks, group networks have a more defined character (although at times ambiguous), clearer boundaries (but not impermeable) and, at times, a vertical mode of functioning (often contrary to the wishes of a majority of members). They tend to pursue "collective objectives": these are therefore "objective-oriented" networks and, in this sense, they resemble organizations.

La Due Lake and Huckfeldt (1998) argued that the production of social capital depends, among other things, on certain structural characteristics of networks (frequency of interaction, size and scope of the network). Our analysis also takes into account the history and quality of relations (Derksen and

Joint action occurs when players from more than one sector of intervention mobilize and join forces to pool their respective skills to respond to clearly identified common needs in the community (Lebeau et al., 1997: 13). There is a very practical dimension to this concept that sets it apart from consultation, for example. While in essence, joint action emerges from a voluntary framework and involves an egalitarian relationship among participants, the groups and players possess different strengths and often diverging, even opposing, interests (Schneider, 1987). Negotiation is an intrinsic aspect of joint action, with consensus the ultimate goal. In this sense, joint action precedes partnership. Joint action can be limited in scope (in terms of time and diversity of players), but it can also become formalized. For example, the seven Tables de concertation (TCQ – roundtables) in Montréal are formal forums for joint action among organizations in a given neighbourhood. These roundtables have diverse roots; many have emerged from existing community councils created by organizations. Others are the fruit of initiatives by various social players. The way they function varies from very formal to very informal, with membership representing a broad range of backgrounds and objectives.

Genuine partnership can be defined as an egalitarian and equitable relationship between two parties with different natures, missions, activities, resources, and methods of functioning. In a partnership, both parties make contributions that are different but mutually considered to be essentially equal. Genuine partnership is therefore based on mutual respect and recognition of the contributions and the parties involved in the relationship of interdependence. The goal of partnership is an exchange of services and/or resources of a different nature but of comparable weight or value or recognized as such by the parties involved. The goal of partnership may be to create a project or resource jointly. Last, partnership leaves room for partners to negotiate and define their common project (Panet-Raymond and Bourque, 1991: 63).

Certain group networks define themselves more as coalitions of organizations. This term is most often used to describe alliances of community organizations created to defend a common position and establish a balance of power to influence political orientations considered threatening or contrary to community interests. Coalitions tend to be short-lived, but they may lead to the creation of permanent spaces for joint action, be it to promote a certain vision of local development or to create a lobby group. Our review of the experiences identified includes development corporations (local, community, or economic), that is, very formal group networks that seek to reconcile social and economic objectives in a given territory that has experienced a decline in traditional economic activities.

Nelson, 1995). Examining the conditions under which these networks emerge involves an analysis of the contexts in which their formation is triggered. The literature suggests a few such contexts. Many networks are created in the face of a problem that affects the community on a scale that surpasses an individual group's capacity to act (Lessof and Jowell, 2000). Social problems most commonly cited since the early 1990s include social exclusion, poverty, precariousness, and social isolation. Other problems highlight the importance of a territorial dimension: criminality, vandalism, homelessness, etc. But as Forrest and Kearns (2001) pointed out, the social and the territorial are often intertwined, either as a result of the vagueness of the concept of community (Taylor, 2004; White, 1994) or as a result of the embeddedness of social networks at multiple levels. From a slightly different perspective, coalitions of groups can be formed to promote a common cause that requires organizing on a greater collective scale. Examples include the mobilization of groups around local/community development issues (Fontan, 1994), or the promotion of women or seniors' causes. The need to create a group network may also emerge from the anticipation by the groups concerned of a change that may affect their activities, in an effort to protect their gains or maintain a balance of power (Paxton, 2002). Finally, institutional approaches to creating group networks are often the offshoot of a plan to implement a new policy and a new government program that may pertain to a given problem or a new vision of governance.

Resources Mobilized or Produced by Group Networks

The third dimension of social capital pertains to the resources mobilized and produced through interactions within group networks. The literature on what circulates within personal networks offers several typologies for classifying resources (Charbonneau and Turcotte, 2002). Empirical studies of social capital tend to follow the approach employed by Granovetter or Lin who focus on employment access; the emphasis, therefore, is on the circulation of information and advice (see also Langlois, 1977; Lévesque and White, 2001). Other studies focus on social support within networks (Wellman and

Wortley, 1990; Charbonneau, 2003) and look at the contribution of time, emotional support or the sharing of expertise, material resources, or financial support.

In our analysis of group networks, we make a distinction between the resources groups possess and exchange with other groups (information, material resources, expertise, sharing of time or money), and resources actually produced through interaction. We divide resources produced into four main categories:

- sharing collective responsibilities, which was impossible at the level of the original group;
- the joint creation of new resources and the organization of collective activities;
- empowerment capacity building among the network's members and the clienteles that use them (Derksen and Nelson, 1995); and
- dimensions related to citizenship and democratic processes in society: shared learning of the rules of functioning within a heterogeneous community (tolerance, compromise, living with diversity), development of a civic culture and an organized opposition, broadening the political debate (Paxton, 2002; Mayer, 2003).

By including the emergence of a critical collective force or opposition as a product of social capital, we move beyond the usual meaning that only takes into account those elements that reinforce the status quo, conformity, and social control, as in the works of Portes or Putnam. Analyzing the effects of the creation of group networks also reveals the often-ignored "negative effects": exclusion of external players, concentration of financial resources, problems of loyalty and time, etc. Last, our analysis of the conditions for the emergence of social capital also stresses the lessons history can teach us about the success or failure of group networks.

Analysis of Six Case Studies

We selected six case studies and divided them into sets of two. All the cases identified in the literature had previously been organized into three categories: networks created to resolve social and community problems, networks established to promote a social cause, and networks created in the face of changes to methods of governance. The six case studies selected fall under the first category; however, the other cases of group networks are considered in our review of the literature and concluding comments. Each pair of cases combines a successful initiative and failed initiative. All the cases identified in the first category were loosely organized into three different types. Two combined cases were selected to represent each of these three types.

1. Cases dealing with the emergence of a new problem in the community that combines territorial issues and social exclusion, primarily affecting youth (or youth from a specific cultural community). Solutions tend to focus on sports and recreation projects.
   a. Joint action at the municipal level in Brownsburg to open a youth centre and organize other activities to address juvenile delinquency (success).
   b. A project to build a YMCA for young Haitians in the St. Michel district in Montréal (failure).
2. Cases dealing with problems affecting the lives of families whose children are at risk (violence, neglect). Solutions are diverse in nature, but often call on intervention programs designed outside the partnerships formed.
   a. Implementation of the Ensemble maître de soi karate program (and other activities),

Literature Search

An initial literature search was conducted by entering keywords (partnership, joint action, etc.), and then consulting the bibliographies of the first texts identified. There was a wide range of themes: local and regional development, violence, troubled youth, families, mental health, immigration, seniors, etc. A second search, based on the evaluation of partnership experiences, helped to identify studies focused on the outcomes of these experiences. At this stage, we contacted various researchers involved in these evaluations. Most of the literature consulted was case studies or summaries of case studies (40 experiences and projects). One third of these were taken from journal articles, and the others were taken from research reports. Almost all the literature addressed the process of implementing a group network. One third of the studies also discussed the outcomes of actions carried out by networks. The conclusions addressed the effects of these experiences on the partners and, to a lesser extent, on the clienteles of the resources created. Very few of the conclusions addressed the long-term effects of these alliances. It should be pointed out that most of the evaluations and follow-ups of experiences led to the preparation of reports immediately on completion of the project implementation phase, which limits their value for evaluating the production of social capital. While the studies do not use this terminology (social capital), this did not hinder our analysis.

designed to prevent problems of family violence, introduced in various municipalities in the Outaouais region (success).

   b. Implementation of a program to prevent the mistreatment of children, funded by the Community Action Program for Children (CAPC) (failure).

3. Cases dealing with issues of social exclusion (greater scope and duration than the cases in type 1) and, more specifically, exclusion from the job market, social isolation, and poverty, affecting different social and age groups, including seniors. Solutions are often based on the empowerment of individuals and communities.
   a. Implementation of action groups to promote cardiovascular health in disadvantaged areas (Montréal neighbourhood), involving participants experiencing problems of isolation, exclusion, and employability (failure).
   b. Long-term collaboration between the organization Entraide bénévole and the Centre locale de services communautaires (CLSC) Armand-Frappier (St. Janvier), to provide home-care services for seniors with the aim of preventing social isolation and promoting individual autonomy (success).

Since our study focuses on group networks, it is no surprise that collaborations sometimes bring together a mix of groups, both institutional and community-based. The initiative, however, often comes from a single group. Our choice of case studies deliberately included institutional and community initiatives. The six cases enabled us to document a wide variety of spheres, approaches, solutions and effects in terms of shared and created social capital, in both the short and long term. A detailed presentation of the cases is provided in the Appendix.[7] What follows is a simple presentation of the main characteristics of each case study, highlighting the factors that contributed to the success or failure of the projects, organized according to the three categories presented at the beginning of the paper: initial conditions, network structure, and resources.

Case Study 1 (successful) – The creation of social capital to fight juvenile delinquency in the community of Brownsburg

In April 1998, following an initiative by the chief administrative officer of the Municipality of Brownsburg and a CLSC social worker, individuals from various sectors were called on to mobilize in response to problems affecting the community, namely, youth vagrancy, drug pushing, youth bullying, and intimidation of seniors. The joint action group decided to establish a youth centre and gradually introduce other permanent community activities.

Elements that contributed to the success of the project:

1. Initial conditions:
   - The project was developed after identifying a genuine need to resolve a problem of limited scope.
   - There was a common understanding of the problems and a real agreement on the goals of the project and the appropriate methods.
   - There was a shared conviction of the incapacity to act alone.
   - Objectives were realistic and the first project (youth centre) was rapidly implemented.
   - The positive effects of the first initiatives created the trust necessary to pursue the project.
   - There was a shared realism concerning the difficulties of the joint action process itself.
2. Network structure:
   - Internal functioning respected the logic of the network: open membership, collective functioning loosely defined from the outset, objectives that evolved over the course of meetings.
   - There was control over all aspects of the project internal to the joint action network.
   - Respective mandates did not overlap.
   - There was respect among members.
   - Core members were stable and available.
   - There was no struggle for power or control over financial resources.
   - The network was open through the mobilization of volunteers and workers.
   - The long-term interest of members was sustained.
3. Resources:
   - Resources required to complete the project were largely internal to the network.
   - External resources were mobilized to respond to short-term needs, thereby reducing the risk of external control over the project.

Case Study 2 (failure) – Power struggles within the group network preventing the establishment of a recreation centre for young Haitians facing problems of delinquency

Some young Haitians in the St. Michel district were grappling with problems of delinquency and street gangs. To reduce these difficulties, a community organization (Alliance haïtienne-québécoise d'aide à la jeunesse – AHQAJ) proposed the construction of a recreation centre based on models developed by other communities (such as the Jewish community) and joined forces with the YMCA to carry out this project. The objective was to reduce idleness among youth and carry out prevention and outreach activities. Years of difficulties ensued, revealing the complexity of creating a group network. The recreation centre was never built, and the original objectives were sidelined as other players in the community took over the project.

Elements that contributed to the failure of the project:

1. Initial conditions:
    - The solution was too ambitious for the problem identified.
    - The social objectives (of the AHQAJ) were incompatible with the profitability objectives (of the YMCA) from the outset.
    - The members were unable to agree on a diagnosis, objectives, and a common solution after new members were brought into the network.
    - The members were unable to move beyond the interests of their particular group to mobilize around a project proposed by a community organization with a contested leadership.
    - There was a lack of respect and trust among the members.
2. Network structure:
    - The initial composition of the membership was inadequate to attain the objectives.
    - New members questioned the initial diagnosis.
    - The mandate of each member was unclear.
    - There was a struggle for control over initiatives and leadership, and efforts by the recreational sector to preserve its control over the sphere of action.
    - Members operated on different territorial scales and promoted competing projects elsewhere.
3. Resources:
    - There were no internal resources within the core group, thereby requiring it to partner with members who were hostile to the initial project.

Case Study 3 (successful) – Mobilization of social capital through recreational activities to resolve problems of violence among youth in Buckingham and Masson-Angers

The Maison de la famille Vallée-de-la-Lièvre (MFVL) was concerned about violence and its effect on families. By partnering with the CLSC, it developed a karate program for children between 6 and 10 years of age accompanied by a parent, to help these children with problems related to aggression, behaviour, learning, and relationships. The karate activity also included story reading. Midway through the program, one hour on discipline and communication was added. Several partners from the community joined the initiative to ensure its success.

Elements that contributed to the success of the project:

1. Initial conditions:
    - This small-scale project had no pretension of solving all problems, but rather sought to contribute to improving the lives of some families.
    - The MFVL was able to convince other members that they could benefit from a pre-existing project.
    - A scientific argument was developed that demonstrated the importance of the approach selected and fostered the trust of new members.
    - There was a close working relationship among the core members (pre-existing personal network).
    - There was mutual respect among the members and respect for the community organization's leadership abilities.
2. Network structure:
    - The network had a limited scope (around small projects).
    - There was control over all aspects of the project internal to the joint action network.
    - Members were recruited on a strategic basis to ensure the success of the project.
    - Roles were clearly defined (no overlapping mandates).

  - The core was stable with guaranteed long-term involvement of key members.
  - There was a pivotal person.
  - The long-term interest of members was sustained.

3. Resources:
  - There was an effective strategy to mobilize resources to carry out activities.
  - The resources required to complete projects were primarily internal.
  - Base funding was guaranteed to develop longer-term projects among key members and to avoid future issues of control by external resources.
  - There was a short-term, but strategic, contribution of external resources.
  - The resources invested bore fruit beyond the original project (project imitated elsewhere).

Case Study 4 (failure) – Access to funding to prevent the mistreatment of children: An inadequate pretext for creating social capital

In the autumn of 1993, a CLSC community organizer, who went on leave a few weeks later, invited a community organization (unnamed) to meet with her to develop a program to prevent the mistreatment of children. Apparently, the first goal was to take advantage of federal funding under the CAPC. None of the participants in the network had been involved for very long in the respective organizations and they knew little about the needs of the community. They developed a two-part plan involving early stimulation workshops and home visits. The workshops were to be offered to mother-infant (0 to 6 months) dyads with the goal of helping mothers to be active and interactive with their babies, and to improve the quality of their methods of interaction. An examination of this project reveals how the group network was more concerned about problems in its internal functioning, in particular the control of external resources, than the services it offered. The network fell apart a few months after the project got off the ground.

Elements that contributed to the failure of the project:

1. Initial conditions:
  - The diagnosis was not based on an understanding of the community.
  - Each member group was unable to overcome its self-interest to join forces around a shared project and to accept the fact that other members would also derive benefit.
  - The players preferred to act alone.
  - Participation in the project was solely motivated by the possibility of accessing funding, which required the creation of a partnership.
  - There was a lack of respect and trust among members.

2. Network structure:
  - The choice of member group representatives to participate in the project was poor (absence of previous personal networks).
  - Individual mandates were poorly defined.
  - The pivotal person left and was never replaced.
  - Difficulties arose over leadership and control of external funding.
  - Externally imposed leadership was not suitable for an emerging network (establishment of power relations contrary to the usual logic in which the "institutional" members control the network).

3. Resources
  - There was an absence of internal resources within the core group resulting in over-dependence on external resources.
  - External resources were mobilized primarily to establish the legitimacy of the players.

Case Study 5 (failure) – Prevention of cardiovascular disease in a disadvantaged neighbourhood through a flawed social capital mobilization strategy

On the basis of epidemiological studies demonstrating the link between cardiovascular disease and social factors (poverty, social isolation), Quebec's public health branch (Direction de la Santé publique – DSP) set up two heart health action groups in a Montréal neighbourhood with several poverty indicators and a high rate of cardiovascular disease. The idea was that these groups, created in partnership with a community restaurant managed by youth on income security and a coalition of community food-security organizations, would introduce and manage prevention programs in the community. These projects were poorly rooted in the local community and ill-adapted to the needs of the target population and the abilities of the players involved. They dragged on for a long time, losing most of the group participants along the way, before finally introducing small-scale activities that ended up having no impact on the community.

Elements that contributed to the failure of the project:

1. Initial conditions:
    - The diagnosis was not based on knowledge of the actual environment and the targeted community.
    - There was a poor interpretation of survey results in which statistical correlations were linked to causality.
    - The solution was imposed by one of the members and the objectives were unrealistic.
    - Participation by the targeted community organizations was solely motivated by the possibility of accessing funding on condition of creating a partnership.
    - There was an absence of any common understanding of the problems and needs.
    - There was a lack of respect and trust among members.
    - The process was lengthy with no concrete results, leading to a loss of interest by the members.
2. Network structure:
    - The groups selected were unsuitable (poor understanding of the actions of the groups), as were the representatives of the member groups who participated in the project (absence of a previous relationship among the groups and insufficient human capital among the participants in the projects).
    - Imposing a strategy of empowerment was contrary to the very philosophy of this strategy.
    - Internal functioning was based on a hierarchical structure, contrary to the logic of a network.
    - The groups acted on widely diverging territorial scales.
3. Resources:
    - There was a lack of internal resources within the network to ensure the survival of the project beyond the experimental phase.
    - Scarce financial resources were dedicated to very specific expenses (income supplement).
    - Expertise was put to poor use.

Case Study 6 (successful) – A long-term partnership between institutions and community organizations to reduce social isolation among seniors

In 1981, the community organization Entraide bénévole (EB) was created to offer home-care services to seniors, to reduce their social isolation, promote their autonomy and re-create the spirit of community mutual support. This organization was well rooted in the community and participated in the process that led to the creation of the CLSC Armand-Frappier in 1984. The EB offered complementary services to those provided by the CLSC, and the CLSC made referrals for the EB's home support and Bonjour quotidian programs. The CLSC offered the elderly more technical and specialized services while the EB provided socio-emotional support through its volunteers. Both partners also participated in numerous joint action structures in the community. This case study illustrates an informal partnership that has enjoyed 20 years of success.

Elements that contributed to the success of the project:

1. Initial conditions:
    - The organization was well rooted in the community and enjoyed a great deal of legitimacy.
    - There was a long-standing positive relationship between the organizations and between individuals as well as a sensitivity to the needs of each other's organizations.
    - There was a shared understanding of the needs of seniors in the community, as well as objectives and solutions.
    - A long-term approach was applied to a large-scale problem, with long-term solutions.
    - Concrete results from this alliance have been observable over a long period and encourage this partnership to be pursued.
2. Network structure:
    - This was a small-scale network, integrated into a large community space.
    - All parties shared the same territorial space.
    - There was control over all aspects of the project internal to the network.
    - Mandates were clear and complementary, with no struggles over power or for control of resources.

- Operations were informal and collective, and respected the logic of a network.
- The core group was stable, with the presence of a pivotal person and long-term participation of key members.
- There was a capacity to adjust to changes in organizations.
- The network was open through the mobilization of volunteers and workers.

3. Resources:
    - The base funding was sufficient to ensure the continuity of activities.

Review of the Literature on Group Networks

The literature we reviewed provides actual step-by-step instructions on how to create a group network. What conditions are necessary for a fruitful partnership? What are the most common causes of failure? The literature on these two questions[8] is extensive since the studies focused primarily on monitoring experiences in progress and learning from them so they could be reproduced in other contexts or on a larger scale. In fact, government funding is often used to analyze the implementation of pilot projects that are then transformed into new intervention programs or practices based on structures that have become very popular, such as partnerships, collaborative structures, and a wide variety of joint action groups. The literature is not widely read, however, because it is dispersed in a variety of research reports with limited circulation.[9]

The studies reveal more about the internal conditions that underlie the proper functioning of structures (particularly the interrelationships between members), and less about the impact of external factors. The second point is essential to our analysis since it is often here that the role of the federal government comes into play, that is, as an external actor to a group network that provides specific resources to help the network attain its objectives. The studies provide us with more knowledge on how to ensure a strong partnership than how to reach targeted objectives or how to mobilize and produce resources. Moreover, we know more about the causes of failure than the causes of success. Having said that, it is important to review briefly the more obvious conditions needed to achieve success.

Conditions for a Functional Group Network

Certain conditions ensure the successful creation of a network and its long-term functioning, while others allow the network to produce resources. Clearly, if there is no network, there are no resources. The first conditions must therefore be met for the second objective to be attained.

1. Choosing the Right People

While group networks bring together groups, these groups are represented by individuals. As a result, the "right people" are often cited as a condition for success. Above all, this notion refers to personality (interpersonal conflicts are a major cause of failure) and several other elements: previous long-term participation in the source group (the "new kid on the block" always causes major problems), knowledge of the milieu, capacity to negotiate on the spot (instead of constantly referring back to the group), and stability. The more the groups within the group network are committed to a common cause, the more likely they will be to appoint the right people.[10]

2. Building on Pre-Existing Informal Relations

In reality, individuals themselves often take the initiative to contact individuals in other groups directly. When group networks are created on the basis of pre-existing informal relationships, there is a better chance that the projects will be successful. A relationship of trust must therefore be established before developing a project.

3. Ensuring Recognition by the Milieu

Member groups must also be the "right groups" to attain the targeted objectives and, beyond the resources they bring to the network, their roots in the milieu provide them with internal and external recognition that predates the creation of the network. This is a crucial condition to avoid issues of control and participation in the network under false pretences (as we saw in Case Study 4). Recognition goes hand in hand with mutual respect, and all these factors help build the trust needed for people to work together effectively.

4. Sharing a Common Definition of Partnership

Based on our review, we are left with the impression that all forms of networks, from the most highly structured to the least structured, have the potential to carry out successful projects. It is critical, however, that member groups share the same vision of the consequences of their commitment, in a given type of network, particularly with respect to its functioning, respective mandates, and leadership. In fact, there is far greater disagreement over the meaning of "partnership"[11] than the other forms of collaboration reviewed.

5. Rallying Organizational Cultures

Achieving consensus among the members of a group network is difficult, because each person already belongs to another group and already subscribes to his or her own "organizational culture." The problem of "cultural differences," often cited in unsuccessful cases, is not limited to the functioning of the network, but also relates to a specialized language (which conceals issues of social class), theoretical references, ideological convictions, and the mission each group has committed to with respect to its own members. To reconcile all of this, many emphasize the importance of a pivotal person or intermediary, whose presence is essential in preventing these issues from impeding the collective process.

6. Investing Resources in the Network

Choosing the "right groups" is informed by an effort to achieve the right mix of diverse and complementary resources to avoid duplication, which leads to overlapping mandates and misunderstandings. This raises the more fundamental question of whether there are truly any resources to offer the group network (which, among other things, ensures the respect of the other members). Ideally, the membership of the group network should be based on the objectives sought. But this is not always possible since "ideal" members are not always available, and the objectives are not always clearly defined from the outset.

Conditions for Attaining Targeted Results

1. A Solution that Fits the Scope of the Problem

The range of experiences reviewed is extremely broad. The case studies leave the impression that the scope of the problem and the scope of the proposed solutions influence the capacity to attain the targeted objectives (and to judge them). The combination of a small-scale problem/solution (Case Study 1) quickly leads to measurable success in a relatively small and homogeneous network. In some cases, a large-scale solution is applied to a problem of limited scope; here, the chances of success are significantly less (as in Case Study 2), partly because the process to mobilize resources to produce new collective resources will require too much effort. Inversely, there is no rule against tackling large social problems (poverty, isolation, and exclusion) with small-scale solutions (Case Study 3). How then can we measure the expected improvement of the collective situation (reducing poverty or exclusion)? Which prompts another question: Is it even possible to tackle these large problems?

Many group networks tackle complex problems, including the Corporations de développement économiques communautaires (CDÉCs: community economic development corporations), which have been the focus of many studies. These alliances are created through a mobilization process within a community in response to declining industrial and economic activities in urban neighbourhoods or outlying regions. The movement is usually sparked by growing citizen awareness, group discussions and a preliminary examination of the various avenues of intervention within the territory. The history of CDÉCs and other similar group networks is part of a long process to create joint action gradually among a wide variety of actors (local associations, government departments, unions, businesses, financial institutions, etc.) mobilized around common objectives to revive the local economy and employment with particular concern for social development. The federal government tends to be involved in these initiatives, given the importance of employment issues, through financial contributions in the form of various employment assistance programs.

As these alliances grow, they represent an increasingly diverse coalition of interests with a more formalized structure. Beyond a first level of sharing their expertise and their major capacity for strategic mobilization, their collective action in terms of creating new social capital produces extremely significant and concrete results. These group networks take action on various fronts: improving human capital (employability of citizens), supporting local businesses and new initiatives, creating new businesses and development funds, etc. Over time, these networks come to be regarded as actors with respected ideas about local development issues. In fact, their own views evolve as a result of their participation in conferences, information tours, mobilization activities, sponsored studies and numerous academic analyses of which they are the focus.

These analyses emphasize the importance of a strong sense of belonging that motivates the participants in these alliances, a precondition for the success of their actions. They are also a reminder that the social capital created by these alliances favours democratic participation, local involvement, and personal and collective empowerment. Above all, the analyses focus on the history and accomplishments of group networks, rather than on the obstacles encountered, although they do point to some of the difficulties in reconciling organizational cultures and the major efforts required to mobilize the resources of a wide variety of actors. Even though the initial impulse that spurred their creation is a desire to resolve a given economic or social problem within the community, their approach gradually shifts to promoting various social causes. In this way, they resemble other coalitions whose main role is to defend a particular cause, but do not take the form of a mixed group network. Alliances of community organizations (single-issue coalitions, federations of organizations, etc.) that defend the causes of their members focus, like CDÉCs, on establishing a certain balance of power with existing institutions. Changes to laws and policies over several decades prove that action is often very effective. These group networks share the resources of their members, mobilize external resources to meet their operational needs, and produce capital in the form of civic participation, political involvement, and collective empowerment within the community.

2. Working Together to Achieve Common Goals

Regardless of the sphere of action, certain conditions necessary for the functioning of the network must be respected if objectives are to be met. First, the members must share a common understanding of the problems (or of the cause to be defended). This is not as straightforward as it may seem, since the history of these experiences shows that a group often arrives with preconceived notions. The impression of having to submit to an "imposed idea" is one of the most commonly cited causes of failure. It is, however, possible to convince future partners with the right arguments. In Case Study 3, the project promoter presented the convincing argument that each participant would be able to attain specific objectives; the DPS (Case Study 5) was less successful. Yet, in both cases, "scientific arguments" were put forward.

How a problem is understood is sometimes based on direct observation of deteriorating social dynamics within a community (case studies 1 and 2), or on general scientific analyses that establish correlations between the existence of social problems and certain characteristics of a population. However, the latter approach runs the risk of erroneously applying these general correlations to local conditions. This is a common approach in the area of high-risk individual or family behaviour, and often involves the use of foreign intervention models (usually American). Generally, this approach leads to solutions that are poorly adapted to the realities of local communities and creates immediate distrust among the actors in the community. While this approach has a poor success rate, it is, of course, possible to adapt foreign models carefully to local characteristics, if certain specific conditions are in place.[illegible] Often, however, only a handful of families actually benefit from support or additional services (Case Study 3), and it is difficult to determine if broader and longer-term effects were achieved in relation to the "scientific observation" that inspired the action in the first place.

A common understanding of a problem or cause is essential to a common definition of the objectives and actions to be taken (failure in Case Study 5). What is, however, the best relation to establish between the group network's common objective and the "personal" objectives of the member groups? The analysis of the case studies reveals several possible scenarios, but the choice must respect a fairly specific formula: each group's willingness to solve the identified collective problem plus a realization that individual action is not possible plus respect for the contribution of the other member groups. Using a group network to attain purely personal objectives quickly becomes apparent to the other member groups and leads directly to failure. In this instance, the social ties theory is clearly more productive in terms of the creation of new community social capital than the utilitarian theory.

3. Respecting the Logic of a Network

Certain structural conditions must also be respected for objectives to be attained. A pre-existing agreement on these objectives must be maintained over time and must not be derailed with changes in orientation or personnel. A reference person (the project's memory) is very useful and researchers who "accompany" the implementation of certain projects can sometimes assume this role. The most common causes of structural failure are related to issues of control and power when certain members view the group network as a hierarchical organization and they seek to occupy a place at the top. If there is indeed a leader in these projects, this individual's role must be to convince not to constrain. Furthermore, it is important to remember that an empowerment approach cannot be imposed in an authoritarian manner (failure in Case Study 5).

An effective network must be open and able to rely on additional external support from community group volunteers or work colleagues (CLSCs or other), thereby confirming the membership of the whole group (not only of its representative) in the group network. Some analysts point to the ever-present danger of the group network closing in on itself, while others have gone so far as to state that converging interests can also lead to the concentration of resources which hinders the emergence of new groups within the community. Group networks are often created to accomplish a broader scope of action than is possible for each individual group to achieve on its own. When member groups' activities already take place on the same territory and are of similar scale, undertaking collective action is easier than when networks bring together members whose actions cover territories of different scales, with the risk of dispersed interests and competing projects. In Case Study 2, the YMCA was conducting two parallel projects and, in the end, it was the "other" project that mobilized all of its attention.

Results Obtained: Producing and Mobilizing Resources

The first effect of creating group networks in terms of social capital is the sharing of existing resources. Member groups can share facilities, clientele, and information. This sharing increases the efficiency of each group and allows additional services to be offered to existing users.

Collective objectives, however, are generally more ambitious. Each member's use of resources must lead to the creation of a new resource, on a larger scale of action, which should, in turn, reach a new population. The creation of a group network must, ideally, bring together members whose resources are complementary, by trying as much as possible to acquire, from within, the resources needed to implement the collective project.

In experiences primarily defined by a problem to be solved, attaining objectives is often measured exclusively by the creation of an anticipated new resource, rather than the capacity of this new resource to reduce the problem identified from the outset. Yet, a genuine gain in capital for a community can only be measured once the new resource has been used. In the studies we consulted, evaluations are generally based on the number and characteristics of participants in new activities and their degree of satisfaction once the activities have been completed. But how can we put results like these in perspective when the objective is the alleviation of large-scale problems such as poverty, social isolation, and exclusion? These problems require more exhaustive methods that track the lives of users over a long period. Furthermore, from the perspective of preventing social problems, we can, in the long term, consult statistical surveys that tell us if the problems were reduced in certain communities, but it would be impossible to know if the results were achieved due to a new resource used by certain individuals, at a very specific time in their lives. In fact, the more ambitious the collective objective, the harder it is to measure the actual level of success. Case Study 1 (problem/solution with a limited scope) allows us to see, in the short term, the effects of the action of a group network on reducing an identified problem through the social and economic vitality of the affected communities. On a very different scale, the influence of community development corporations or lobby groups advocating a social cause, such as the rights of women, gays and lesbians, or seniors, can be measured in the long term through changes in policy, institutional approaches, and laws (Charbonneau, 2004).

In summary, after analyzing all the cases identified, we found that the creation of social capital through group networks led to positive results, such as new programs and activities (prevention, information, support, celebrations) for various social groups, equipment for the community (e.g., recreational equipment) and community-based businesses, services, and expertise (job integration, referrals, specialized financial services, development funds, support to local businesses and initiatives).

Social capital created by group networks can have an impact on individuals and communities at other levels, such as democratic processes in society and citizen action. In terms of individuals, this refers to the development of the capacity of citizens to take action and the social integration of marginal groups. In other words, developing the capacity for individual and collective action is in and of itself conducive to maintaining the vitality of communities that is essential to the creation of group networks. In terms of communities, this refers to the development of a collaborative culture, stronger representation of the group within the community, the creation of a balance of power that allows greater influence over community development, a stronger sense of community belonging necessary to promote local participation, and the ability to take a critical look at group actions. Member groups are also able to strengthen their own capacity for action through group networks. In this respect, our analysis of how group networks function could also serve as the basis for a discussion on how a community group can make its own action more effective by enlisting external resources.

1. The Perverse Effects of Overly Formalized Networks

The analyses we consulted also indicate that the creation of group networks does not only have a positive impact. In fact, the time and energy required to set up these networks often conflict with the existing demands on each group, and the ensuing problems quickly reveal the limited internal resources that can be mobilized. The representatives delegated to the group network sometimes feel divided in terms of their loyalties and objectives. Moreover, the formalization of large-scale group networks can lead to the over-professionalization of community action, and the balance of power they create may shift local power into the hands of non-elected representatives – an unforeseen anti-democratic effect within networks whose objectives are explicitly democratic.

Measuring social capital also includes the external resources the group network manages to mobilize for the benefit of the community and according to its scope of action. Government action generally takes place at this level.

Government and Social Capital

While our specific objective is to examine the role of the federal government within the dynamics of social capital, most of the literature deals with all government levels. As a result, we have conducted a broad analysis, identifying specific points that relate to the federal level. In our case studies, the most-present government actors within the group networks were CLSCs and municipalities. Other government actors are rarely members of networks, but develop and maintain ties with these networks through a variety of communication channels. Government actors provide two types of resources to group networks: funding and expertise. Both of these resources take a variety of forms.

Funding can be diffuse and indirect. Funds can also be provided through programs or for specific projects. Government expertise may be given when the problem is being formulated or objectives and solutions defined, giving government an opportunity to interact with the group network in different ways and at different times. Each type of resource has its advantages and disadvantages. The most common issues relate to leadership and the approach selected (authoritarian, voluntary, supportive); control (internal or external) which always involves the double logic of trust/distrust and proximity/distance with respect to the territory of action and the actors themselves; and, last, the temporality of action (moment of contact, duration). All these factors must be taken into consideration when analyzing the role of government in actions led by group networks and the production of social capital. Government bodies can therefore intervene with respect to initial conditions, the network's structure and, of course, the dynamics involved in mobilizing resources.

Direct Participation in the Creation of Social Capital (social networks)

1. Is the "Government" a Member of a Group Network?

While government expertise can be discussed in broad terms, a more direct approach can be taken to examine the expertise provided by institutional representatives who belong to a group network. This, however, raises the question of the relevance of mixed networks and the conditions that ensure the successful functioning of these networks. In terms of the federal government, representatives from employment-related agencies are the most likely participants in group networks. Their situation, role, and other factors that define their presence are not, however, very different from those related to members of networks from other government levels. We have already stressed that informal relationships prior to the creation of a group network are a key factor of success in the actions of a given network. For government, this could entail prioritizing support to community initiatives that are based on pre-existing, clearly proven, collaborations among the members of a group network; taking initiatives to encourage community organizations to join a group network (with the obligation of withdrawing from the group as soon as this has been done); appointing government representatives to group networks who have already been present within the community for a certain period of time; and reducing major internal personnel turnover that inevitably leads to frequent changes in government representation within group networks and, ultimately, to failure.

Governments should only participate as internal members of a group network if they can appoint representatives who act on the same territorial scale as other members of the network. Their representatives must enjoy a certain autonomy that allows them to participate in decision making without always having to refer back to their organizations.

Government representatives must share, with the other members of the group network, the same definition of the terms that define their relationship – partnership, joint action group, short-term collaboration – and assume the consequences of their agreement to participate in such bodies, whose characteristics and conditions are generally described in the many publications we consulted. A group network cannot mobilize and produce social capital unless all its members share the same understanding of the problems, solutions, and means for attaining the objectives. In other words, all members must be engaged in a common cause. This is easier said than done, especially since in the last few decades the interest of government partners in joining group networks has often been interpreted by other members of networks as a gesture motivated more by cost reduction than by genuine trust in the actions of community organizations. But, these networks cannot function without trust and mutual respect. As we have already stated, it is possible to work together and pursue one's own objectives, provided they are clearly stated and remain secondary to the common goal.

Mixed networks are extremely effective in producing new resources (new social capital) within communities since they provide the best possible guarantee of diverse and complementary available resources. Achieving success, however, depends on overcoming many obstacles inherent in the diversity of the network's membership. Accustomed to working within the tight hierarchical framework of their respective organizations, government representatives who become members of group networks face the major challenge of having to adapt to a much more horizontal structure. Moreover, since they are often the main providers of financial resources and scientific expertise, they also have a tendency to impose their own projects, language, and leadership. This is a major cause of failure for mixed networks.

This problem is of little consequence to federal government representatives who are relatively absent as members of group networks. But this does not mean intervention by the federal level has no impact on the organization of group networks. In fact, federal representatives can very well impose certain operating conditions, even if they are external to the network. This strategy, however, carries a great deal of risk. The best approach is to let the members of the network negotiate their own method of organization, focusing instead on ways to monitor how the resources provided are used. Of course, this does not mean government should play no role in identifying the best funding strategies for group networks.

2. Mobilizing Financial Resources

In the literature, we were able to identify various ways of mobilizing external financial resources. Some are more effective in ensuring the success of group network projects, while others almost inevitably lead to failure. The best strategy remains long-term base funding of member groups, which constitutes the best expression of trust in communities that have always taken the necessary means to solve their own problems. Guaranteed access to long-term base funding provides organizations with the flexibility they need to initiate new projects adapted to the changing needs of the community, and to ensure these projects have all the time they need to prove their viability. Long-term funding translates into more time to provide services to their users and less time spent constantly searching for new funding to hold on to personnel. Through permanent positions, key individuals in community organizations can build long-term, informal ties in their communities, which constitute the foundation of many group networks. To ensure base funding to organizations within the community, certain criteria must be met. This does not mean organizations tackling the problem of the day should receive all the funding. Instead, criteria, such as strong roots and recognition in the community, would be good indicators of pre-existing social capital. Moreover, financial support should not be restricted to service-oriented organizations. After all, advocacy organizations are the ideal breeding grounds for social commitment and, by extension, the social capital of democracy – another critical objective.

The second form of financial resources provided by government identified in the literature is short-term funding, which is less targeted from the outset but can easily be used by group networks to round out their internal resources. This is another very effective funding method that should only be made available once the group network has proven that it possesses most of the resources internally to attain its objectives. The complementary role of external funding ensures that initiatives and decisions are controlled from within the group network.

The third form of government funding identified in the literature is much more likely than the other two forms to lead to project failure; this type of funding is extremely targeted within the framework of national intervention programs. The inability to adapt these programs to local conditions and the obligation to submit to rules and external controls are major obstacles to the success of a project. In fact, targeted funding often has the perverse effect of reorienting community organizations away from the services they were already providing to users whom they know far better than those seeking to impose predefined programs. These organizations often agree to develop the programs to obtain the funding they need to maintain their permanent staff.

Case Study 3 illustrates an interesting combination of external resources where short-term funding was used to create an intervention program and ensure the evaluation of the project, and base funding was used to ensure the long-term survival of the project and even the development of complementary projects, by guaranteeing the permanent status of the personnel in place.

Research and Social Experimentation on the Effects of Social Capital on Communities: Possibilities and Potential Pitfalls

Government actors are important sources of expertise. Expertise may exist internally, where analyses are conducted to inform policy making and, among other things, diagnose problems related to "social ties" (social isolation, individual and group exclusion, difficulties with integration, incivility, etc.). Governments also provide data through their statistical agencies, which are used to formulate these diagnoses and by civil society actors as the basis for their own initiatives (for instance, establishing a profile of social groups or living environments requiring specific support). Government can also promote the production of external expertise by funding social research; the expertise generated is often geared toward objectives focusing on program development. For the last 15 years, government organizations that subsidize social research have favoured the creation of group networks of partners that bring together researchers and civil society players, thereby ensuring that the scientific expertise created directly serves the purposes of "public" action in its broadest sense. All these types of expertise can be produced or mobilized by the federal government.

Almost all the experiences we reviewed refer to the use of "scientific" expertise. When subordinated to the objectives set by the group network, this expertise can lend credibility to the project (and earn funding for the evaluation of the project), or provide avenues for action based on documentation of existing experiences that can be reproduced and adapted. As our review has shown, it is relatively easy to find a program that corresponds to a targeted action, but much more difficult to find rigorous evaluations of these programs, especially over the long term, and particularly when attempting to understand the effects, not only on the immediate "clientele" but, in broader terms, on the large-scale problems being targeted (poverty, social isolation, integration, etc.). Furthermore, importing models for action or existing programs must always take into account the importance of adapting to local conditions – one of the principles most often neglected.

The worst use of scientific expertise is the authoritarian implementation (initiated by government) of a pre-existing action program imposed on a given milieu, because it corresponds to the characteristics of a particular population "in need" by enticing local actors with material or financial resources for a limited period – just enough time to test the program for the first time. This occurred in Case Study 5, which also demonstrated the poor use of certain statistical correlations between certain characteristics of populations "at risk" and various social problems.

Moreover, our analysis of the literature has also shone light on the perverse effects of a rapid succession of pilot programs, which perhaps favour the production of new scientific expertise, but also lead to weariness, even cynicism among the personnel subjected to these experiments. In fact, these experiments rarely lead to genuine long-term changes in existing practices, in part because funding is often earmarked for experimentation, not for the integration of new programs into existing practices.

Looking Through the "Social Capital Lens"

This review of the literature and, from a wider perspective, the examination of a social capital analysis for the purposes of public policy has prompted us to propose new avenues for government for the creation of expertise. On the basis of this review, and using a still to be completed list of the conditions for success and the factors that lead to the failure of existing experiences of group networks, it would be possible to design an analytical tool (with specific questions, indicators, and objective criteria) that could be used to evaluate future community initiatives requesting government financial support or, more broadly, future government-sponsored community support programs.

The government may also internally create another type of expertise for evaluating the effects of applying its own public policy to maintain "social ties" and preserve existing structures for the circulation of social capital within civil society. The "social capital lens" could, therefore, be used in the same way to address other so-called cross-cutting problems (e.g., discrimination against different social groups, work-family balance), in an effort to raise awareness among various departments with regard to a given social issue.

A "social capital lens" would help, for example, to recognize that one of the best ways to promote the creation of informal relationships (one of the initial conditions to setting up a group network) is to encourage students to pursue their schooling. Indeed, analyses that focus on the intersecting dynamics of social relations and life trajectories demonstrate that an individual's social network develops particularly during the schooling years, and that the many weak ties that are so important to setting up a social network are often born of relationships created during post-secondary education. A "social capital lens" provides a more critical approach to policies that require labour force relocation, leading to uprooted communities and a destroyed capacity to mobilize community resources collectively. If such an analysis were to prevent groups seeking to improve the living conditions of community members from depending on players without resources (with no human, cultural, social capital for success), it would also underline the importance of supporting the initiatives of groups that already have their own resources so their actions do not depend too heavily on external resources, as revealed by the case studies.

A better understanding of the dynamics of social relations favourable to the production and circulation of social capital could also prevent the erosion of family support systems, community group resources, and personal ties of solidarity, and the emergence of social isolation, by penalizing citizens who depend on government financial assistance and use their own social capital. For instance, income-support policies that penalize social assistance recipients who share housing or that put too much pressure on family solidarity, under the pretext of reducing the costs of these programs, show a poor understanding of the conditions necessary for lasting ties of solidarity, thereby running the risk of causing even greater social isolation and failed relationships and, ultimately, creating new needs for support in the community.

Some government initiatives implemented during the 1998 ice storm also demonstrated a poor understanding of the use of social capital. During the ice storm, the government encouraged citizens publicly (on television) to lend support to their loved ones, thereby discrediting all those who had not yet done so, reinforcing the sense of isolation of those who could not rely on loved ones, and sending a useless message to the vast majority of people who were already relying on loved ones, rather than waiting for the government to provide assistance. Moreover, when the crisis was over, the choice to compensate the victims rather than those who had lent their assistance created a great deal of malaise among the former and a sense of injustice among the latter, many of whom said they would not fall into the same trap again. Prior to the government initiative, however, everyone was content in the knowledge that they had been of help or there were people in their communities to whom they could turn.

Conclusion

This review of the experiences of group networks has confirmed our initial beliefs: when problems arise in their communities, Canadians take action and do not hesitate to give their time and share their resources to solve these problems and to voice their opinion on the type of development they would like to see within their communities. This analysis has allowed us to identify the conditions for successful action within group networks to mobilize and produce social capital needed to maintain the vitality of our communities. These analyses can provide important lessons to anyone who wants to participate in a group network.

APPENDIX

1. A Successful Case: Joint Community Action in Brownsburg (1998)

In April 1998, following an initiative by the chief administrative officer of the Municipality of Brownsburg and a CLSC social worker, individuals from various sectors were called on to mobilize in response to problems affecting the community, namely, youth vagrancy, drug pushing, youth bullying, and intimidation of seniors.

Initial mobilization: Parents, citizens, elected municipal officials, representatives of municipal services, the head of the police department, a CLSC co-ordinator, and CLSC workers. During the process, volunteers (citizens), police department personnel, the CLSC, and the school, along with other private and public groups, were approached. The "group" quickly reached a consensus regarding the problems, objectives, and solutions.

Objectives: Prevention among youth rather than punishing gangs; encouraging youth participation and integration in the community. Objectives added at the end of phase 1: combat intolerance toward youth. Solutions: initial projects: open a youth centre and introduce street workers. Projects added during the process: introduce day camps and "a healthy school" project, accelerated implementation of community policing, a neighbourhood watch project, a neighbourhood watch committee (police officers, elected officials, citizen representatives), and a village party.

Project funding: Use network members' resources, sell firewood, and solicit external funds from United Way, local industrial and commercial businesses, provincial MP, federal funds (non-specified). Expertise: use of member resources and borrowing from external models if necessary ("communities that care," "healthy schools," community police, "neighbourhood watch," etc.).

Social Capital

Sharing resources to attain collective objectives: The CLSC provided a street worker, two education specialists, and a community worker to provide expertise (and seek external expertise); the municipality provided police patrols and financial resources. Other resources provided internally: office space, outdoor spaces (parks), and recreational equipment. Volunteers' time to organize activities.

Mobilizing external resources: Short-term funding through the sale of firewood. External funding and external ad hoc expertise, volunteers.

Creating a new resource: Youth centre and other permanent activities. Objectives attained: less vandalism, delinquency, social isolation among youth (they feel accepted, heard, and understood), and a heightened sense of belonging to the community.

External recognition: The municipality was given an award for its contribution to community development.

Democratic dimensions: Personal empowerment: youth (youth centre) and citizens (volunteers); collective empowerment (each group agreed to move beyond the traditional vision of its role, for instance, the municipality assumed its "social responsibilities"), development of collective trust, the capacity to take action, and the power of a collaborative culture; long-term ties of solidarity; and capacity to take a critical look at its work. After one year, the group met to examine the favourable conditions that led to the project's success, the focus of an article that appeared in *Municipalité*.

Lessons to Be Learned

Initial conditions: This was an institutional/mixed project that developed on the basis of a genuine need to resolve a problem of limited scope. The joint action network controlled all aspects of the project: common understanding of the problems, objectives, actions, and most of the resources needed. All the group members were convinced of their inability to act alone. The action objective was realistic and the first projects were quickly implemented. The outcome of the actions taken provided immediate observable effects that fostered the trust needed to propose new projects. Everyone agreed on the essential aspects of the projects, and was realistic about the difficulties of the joint action process itself.

Network structure: This is indeed a network (with a defined objective), not an organization: limited hierarchy, open membership, collective functioning that was loosely defined from the outset, objectives that evolved over the course of meetings. The members had the capacity to make decisions, take action, and provide funding internally, which gave them the latitude they needed to elaborate projects and control important aspects internally. Respective mandates did not overlap and relations were informed by mutual respect. Members of the core group were stable and readily available. There were no struggles for power or control over financial resources. The network's openness allowed for the mobilization of volunteers, workers, and other players, beyond the initial core members. The addition of new objectives and projects shows a capacity to sustain the long-term interest of members. An element that may have contributed to the success of this specific project was the small size of the community. This suggests that an informal (personal) network as well as trust among its members probably existed prior to the project, and that all the members' actions were carried out on the same territorial scale.

Resources: Many internal resources could be quickly mobilized and shared. The external resources were only mobilized as needs arose, to complement internal resources in a limited way (thereby limiting potential external control). In fact, each project seems to have preceded the mobilization of resources.

2. A Counter-Example: The Haitian "Y" in Montréal's St. Michel District

This project envisaged the construction of a recreation centre which never got off the ground. The initiator of the project, a Montréaler of Haitian origin and department head with the youth protection branch (Direction de la protection de la jeunesse – DPJ), founded an organization (Alliance haïtienne-québécoise d'aide à la jeunesse – AHQAJ) in 1990 to deal with the problems of street gangs, juvenile delinquency within the community, and frequent interventions by the DPJ. The objective was to eliminate idleness among youth through prevention and outreach, while offering recreational activities through a community centre project for young Haitians, inspired by models developed by other communities, such as the Jewish community.

Initial mobilization: Members of the AHQAJ mobilized their contacts to find funding sources for the project. There was the possibility of using the tripartite infrastructure program (proposed by a federal government minister). In 1995, a meeting was held with the president of the YMCA's Board of Directors and a partnership was created. Support was given by the mayor of Montréal and the councillor for the district. The federal government financed an initial study on the St. Michel district; in 1996, the YMCA funded a feasibility study and a needs analysis (consultation with the CLSC, police department, etc.). The studies led to changes in the original project in favour of a centre open to all. Apparently, the new federal and provincial approaches to integrating communities and the profit requirement of YMCA centres informed these changes. The profit requirements led to an alliance with the City (which acts as guarantor in case of deficit), but this alliance seems to have been difficult to forge, because the "milieu" (recreational committee, recreational associations, sports federation, and municipal departments) was not involved in the project from the beginning and was opposed to it. The milieu apparently felt threatened by the YMCA, which is not well known within the Francophone community. With the arrival of a new superintendent at the City, the studies were rejected and existing equipment in the same zone was deemed underused.

Change in partnership: the YMCA joined the City to participate in a wider discussion of recreational activities in the St. Michel district. The City assumed leadership of the project and re-opened dialogue with recreational organizations. The study pointed to certain equipment needs, but chose to optimize existing resources. A steering committee composed of 10 members (the City, YMCA, recreational associations, the AHQAJ, academics) validated the results of the study and organized a forum on recreational activities in March 2001, partly to build a bridge between recreational and community spheres, but also to determine action priorities. The forum led to the creation of a roundtable on recreational activities (Table Action Loisirs) led by the joint action organization Vivre St. Michel en Santé and the recreational department. The issues facing young Haitians were lost sight of (after 10 years of problems), and the project's initiator withdrew from the process.

Social Capital

The original objective was not achieved and no new resources were created for the targeted clientele. The partners used their resources (time and money) not to resolve the problems of young Haitians but, at best, to document the recreational needs of a district and the use of existing equipment. The external resources that were mobilized were used to fund the studies. The experience led to the creation of "communication" bodies and reinforced the status quo in terms of the collective relational dynamics that existed prior to the project.

Lessons to Be Learned

Initial conditions: This was a community/mixed project. The problem and diagnosis were similar in scope to those in the preceding case, but the solution was more ambiguous; too ambitious for the members of the initial core group who thought they could make up for the financial and material resources that the Jewish community – used as a model here – was able to mobilize, with "contact" resources within their own community. It soon became apparent that there was incompatibility between the objectives of the AHQAJ and the profitability objectives of the YMCA (the two founding members), requiring an association with the City, which led to the abandonment of the initial project. Individuals from the milieu joined the initial partners, but no consensus was ever reached with regard to a diagnosis, objectives, and common solutions. As a result, resources were wasted on studies. Network members seemed unable to move beyond their own "corporate" interests to rally behind a collective project proposed by an organization with a contested leadership. Moreover, within the steering committee, respective mandates were never clearly defined.

Network structure: In addition to the previously mentioned elements, there was instability within the network and the unexpected arrival of a new member (the superintendent) contributed to the shift away from the initial project. The core partnership did not involve the best members to ensure the project's implementation. A power struggle emerged over control of initiatives, leadership, and efforts (by the recreational milieu) to protect its territory. Members acted on different territorial scales (with another competing project for the YMCA).

Resources: There were no resources to share from the outset. Excessive dependence on external resources required compromises and led to a loss of control over the project. The creation of the roundtable suggested that a structure was being set up to help develop trust prior to elaborating new projects, but it is unlikely, given the departure of the initiator of the original project, that young Haitians will see their specific problems resolved in the short term.

3. A Successful Case: The *Ensemble maître de soi* Karate Program in Buckingham and Masson-Angers

The community organization Maison de la famille Vallée-de-la-Lièvre (MFVL) was concerned about the growing problem of violence and its effect on families. The International Year of the Family in 1994 was an opportunity for the MFVL to develop an activity to help youth between the ages of 6 and 12 who were experiencing difficulties related to aggression, behaviour, relationships, and learning. By forming an alliance with a CLSC community organizer, the MFVL benefited from the financial support of a family fund from Quebec's secretariat for family affairs (Secrétariat à la famille) and the CQRS to develop an initiative accompanied by an evaluation process, namely, a series of karate classes for children between the ages of 6 and 10, accompanied by a parent. The karate activity also included the reading of a story. Midway through the program, one hour on discipline and communication, facilitated by a CLSC social worker, was added.

The project brought together five partners: the MFVL, the CLSC, the school board, the municipalities of Buckingham and Masson-Angers and the Université du Québec à Hull, but made a deliberate choice not to associate itself with youth protection services to avoid defining the initiative as a solution to "family problems." The Karate Kama school provided the instructors. Rather than integrate these classes into its regular program, the MFVL chose to incorporate them into the municipal recreation program to carry out a broader intervention on the socialization of children and families and improve quality of life for the entire community.

Objectives: The partners quickly agreed on the relevance of this program and the idea of using a recreational activity as a means of prevention. The partnership was not based on the creation of the program since it had already been prepared by the MFVL. The partners threw their support behind the project, because it intersected with their specific interests. For instance, the school believed in the value of martial arts in terms of increased self-control and personal discipline; the CLSC wanted to bring parents and children closer together to curtail the potential for abuse; and the municipality saw the project as a way of opening new avenues for recreational activities. The different partners quickly determined the scope of their roles and respective functions, and clearly defined their relationships within the network.

Funding: Members' resources; external solicitation to prepare the program and ensure the project's evaluation.

Expertise: Members' resources and scientific literature to define the project's philosophy (prevention/recreation, parent/child interaction, social diversity, empowerment).

Social Capital

Sharing resources to attain collective objectives: The MFVL was the driving force behind the project. It prepared the program, ensured the presence of a story reader and provided a permanent facilitator. The CLSC provided a community organizer (to prepare the funding application and bring partners into the network) and a social worker to prepare the program, train the facilitator, co-facilitate, and hold a workshop on discipline). The school milieu helped to recruit the clientele and proposed lending financial assistance to the most disadvantaged families. Both municipalities provided space and included this activity in their regular programming (so as not to single out the disadvantaged), while the university research team carried out a project evaluation. Scientific and professional expertise existed within the network prior to the project.

Mobilizing external resources: Funding from a family fund initially got the project off the ground. The CQRS was approached to evaluate the program. The internal resources used to fund personnel for the MFVL, among others, came from external funding sources. The participants also contributed to funding the activities.

Creating new resources: Karate classes (ten 75-minute classes), with story reading and a workshop on family discipline. The facilitator gradually began to play the role of counsellor and to make referrals to other institutional and community resources. Trained by the social worker, the facilitator developed the skills to train other facilitators. The project became a model.

Attaining objectives: One hundred and ninety participants enrolled over two years (one third of which represented families experiencing major difficulties). A higher number of fathers participated in the activities related to family and prevention. The parents gave a positive assessment of the experience (karate and story) and suggested that the interactive formula be used for other municipal recreational activities. Ninety percent of parents participated in the workshop on discipline and gave it a positive evaluation. Improved fitness.

External recognition: The project grew and was implemented in the neighbouring municipality of Thurso. Other local organizations (circus school for example) were interested in drawing on the interactive parent-child approach.

Democratic dimensions: Personal empowerment: the opportunity to participate in fun activities with the family to develop positive socialization methods, improve parent-child communication.

Collective empowerment: communication channels were opened between partners that had not established many connections between their actions. The social fabric was strengthened through the social integration of families that are traditionally "excluded" from recreational activities. Non-violent behaviour was developed within the community. Improvement in health. Long-term ties of solidarity guaranteed the project's long-term life within the community. Development of a capacity for self-evaluation took place, thanks to available funding to evaluate the project (research report available at the MFVL).

Lessons to Be Learned

Initial conditions: This was a community/mixed project based on a concrete problem that proposed a small-scale initiative (therefore easier to implement than the case of the "Y"), without the pretension of offering a panacea, but rather contributing to family quality of life. The project's success depended first on the Maison de la Famille's capacity to convince future partners to join a project that had already been developed. By proving that each group could fulfill its specific interests; the collective project was therefore presented as a lever for each group's projects and by quickly developing a "scientific" project that demonstrated the relevance of the approach. Close co-operation between the two initial partners (MFVL and CLSC) was undoubtedly built on personal relationships established prior to the project which helped the players overcome the distrust so common between community organizations and government institutions. This is why community organizations rarely act as the leaders of a project from start to finish (contrary to the case of the "Y").

Network structure: This was a network of limited scope (built around small projects). As in the Brownsburg case, the members had internal decision making, action, and funding capacities that allowed them to control the most important aspects from the outset (using an external resource). The network was strategically created by a core of initial partners (MFVL and CLSC) with the intention of integrating members that could provide the specific resources required for the success of a predefined project. This facilitated a clear definition of roles and limited the potential problem of overlapping mandates. Core members (facilitators, social workers, etc.) were stable and guaranteed permanence of the MFVL facilitator's contribution to the project's success, much like the strategic contribution of CLSC personnel at the beginning of the process. The network functioned around a pivotal person (MFVL facilitator) who clearly enjoyed a great deal of respect among the other members of the network, thereby limiting power struggles. The addition of new activities and new objectives (funding the most disadvantaged families) showed sustained long-term interest.

Resources: The network was built around a strategy to mobilize the resources necessary to implement the activities; the direct resources were therefore primarily internal. But the project benefited from an external resource (the financial support of a family fund), without which it would probably have not gotten off the ground. This underscores the fragility of this model in which a key moment, namely, elaborating on the project, depended on an institutional resource that was only available in a very specific context: the organization of the International Year of the Family. (Note that several other community projects in this area were launched at this time.) Furthermore, indirect resources that were not mentioned also contributed to the project's success. For example, we can assume that the MFVL received base funding that allowed it to provide permanent facilitation, thereby avoiding the project's derailment over struggles to control potential financial resources that would have otherwise been necessary. The CQRS' contribution allowed the project to be evaluated and, therefore, contributed to enhancing the initial social capital by establishing it as a model for future initiatives.

4. A Counter-Example: The Failed Partnership Between a Community Organization and a CLSC in Implementing a Program to Prevent the Mistreatment of Children

This case study (location and partners have been kept confidential) involves a failed partnership to implement a program to prevent the mistreatment of children. The original partners were a community organization, the CLSC (jointly responsible for management and intervention), and a research team (responsible for the evaluation).

In the fall of 1993, a CLSC community organizer invited a community organization to a meeting with the CLSC to develop a program to prevent the mistreatment of children. Apparently, this initiative was not part of a process to resolve a clearly defined problem, particularly since it was reported that "most of the participants had not been involved for very long and their knowledge of the community was very limited." In fact, all future members of the network (director and worker responsible for jointly facilitating the workshops, CLSC team) were recent employees. Moreover, the original CLSC community organizer took maternity leave during the same month that she had convened the future partners. It would seem that the primary objective had been to take advantage of federal funds available through the CAPC. This program had two components: early stimulation workshops and home visits. The workshops were designed for mother-infant (0-6 months) dyads and their purpose was to encourage mothers to be more active and interactive with their infants, and to improve the quality of their interaction. When the activity was reviewed, one year after the program was introduced, the partners stated that they were motivated to participate in this program because it "1) offered assistance to the population in response to a need, 2) recognized the (community) organization on the territory and 3) provided an opportunity to work with a new clientele that is difficult to reach."

The first activity for the partnership was to prepare the funding application. The partners separated the budget in the application to ensure that each party managed a portion of the funds. This proposal was rejected by the CAPC, because one of its preconditions is that funding be managed by the community organization. The following year, the project was introduced, but tension over control of the funds continued to mount due to a fundamental misunderstanding of the definition of "partnership." An advisory committee was established to try to resolve the problem but it was too late. The researcher who evaluated the project was put in an uncomfortable mediating role. After two series of early stimulation workshops and a few home visits, the partnership was dissolved and the community organization pursued the activities on its own.

Social Capital

The summary article does not mention how many families were reached by the program or if the activities ultimately attained their prevention objective. In fact, relations between the partners became such a central concern that the eventual termination of the relationship was greeted with relief, even though it translated into lower quality services for the clientele. The satisfaction of parents, the clients of the program, significantly eroded after the partnership was dissolved, due to the loss of CLSC expertise. Recruitment also dropped significantly, particularly for home visits, and the new mothers recruited to the program corresponded less to the original target profile. The initial focus of responding to family needs was clearly lost over the course of the project. The two partners succeeded in sharing their expertise for a period of time, but, by the end, the CLSC had stopped providing its resources. The partnership did provide access to external financial resources from the CAPC, but with many restrictions. New resources were created, namely early stimulation workshops and home visits, however these resources "deteriorated" when the partnership ended. Furthermore, it is very unlikely that they will be permanent. This partnership did not create any democratic resources; to the contrary, its failure actually harmed pre-existing relations with external partners as new tensions emerged within the larger milieu (specifically, between the community organization and hospitals).

Lessons to Be Learned

Initial conditions: This was an institutional/mixed project that falls within the same framework as the preceding case study. In the first case, however, the players took the initial step of convincing partners that a collective objective could serve the interests of all members. In this case, the objectives focused on the potential gains for each partner, to the detriment of a truly common goal and in the absence of respect for the other partner's right to benefit from the project. The partnership failed, because each partner believed it could succeed without the other. The reasons for participating in the partnership, as stated during the evaluation, suggested that the real objective was to assert one's legitimacy as a community player, through the CAPC's recognition, a goal that undermined the partnership dynamic from the outset by leading to struggles for power and control over financial resources. Indeed, one is left with the impression that the need for prevention and intervention was artificially created to obtain funds made available for such purposes. All the actors, who were new to their respective workplaces, stated that they knew little about their community and never referred to an existing diagnosis of a need for prevention in the community.

Network structure: While the network was of limited scope (built around small projects), the members did not have the internal capacity to fund the initiative and thereby control the most important aspects of the project. Furthermore, the individuals within the network were not the best placed to design a project of this kind. What's more, no informal network existed prior to this initiative. Under these circumstances, each network member should have clearly defined its role, mandate, and the rules governing the partnership at the outset of the relationship. They did not do so, and problems were already too entrenched by the time an advisory committee was created to address them. In a partnership with such a weak foundation, the CAPC's requirement that the project and funds be managed by one partner triggered its collapse by creating a power relationship that ran counter to the usual logic of a network (under which the institutional partners control such matters), and destabilized a network short on mutual respect among members. The departure of the community organizer who had initiated the project was another major contributing factor in the project's failure, particularly because she was never replaced. As a result, there was no pivotal person or mediator, which forced the researcher affiliated with the project to play this role.

Resources: The partnership was created not to respond to needs, but to access external resources, above all to establish the legitimacy of the actors. Internally then, the partners only had expertise to share, although in this case the complementarity of those resources was a weakness; when the CLSC withdrew, the resource created was greatly impoverished. Last, the fact that the partnership's failure was ultimately greeted with relief, which is stated in the report, clearly demonstrates that the objective of responding to the needs of the population was quickly eclipsed by a power struggle within the network.

5. Major Mobilization, Minor Impact: Healthy Heart Action Groups

On the basis of epidemiological studies showing a link between cardiovascular disease and social factors (poverty, social isolation), Quebec's public health branch (Direction de la Santé publique – DSP) set up two Healthy Heart Action Groups in a Montréal neighbourhood with several poverty indicators and a high death rate from cardiovascular disease. The project was designed by the DSP on the basis of the social and economic empowerment of the community, inspired by popular education. The concept was that these groups would propose and manage prevention programs in the community. Group 1 was created in partnership with a coalition of community food security organizations (1991-1992) that carried out awareness raising, information, and lobbying activities. Group 2 (1993-1994) was created in collaboration with a community restaurant managed by youth on income security. The restaurant served reasonably priced meals to neighbourhood residents. While the community partners were open to the personal development and potential employability aspects of the Action Groups, they were more sceptical of the self-development objective based on their understanding of their members' capacities and did not consider cardiovascular health a priority compared to other needs deemed more urgent (employment, income, housing, food security, psychosocial problems). Thirteen participants were recruited for Group 1: single middle-aged mothers with limited schooling, receiving social assistance, and seeking to reduce their social isolation and acquire new skills. Thirteen participants were recruited for Group 2: men and women in their 40s with limited schooling, experiencing various social and health problems, and in the process of social reintegration. The latter group was motivated by the possibility of creating their own jobs within a future community service to promote health. Following 14 personal training meetings and 23 meetings offering training adapted to the projects, eight of 13 participants abandoned Group 1. Two projects were nevertheless created: Bouffe à bon prix (workshops to help parents and children develop healthier, affordable diets) and Cheminer sans fumée (support group for smokers seeking to reduce or quit smoking). In Group 2, which experienced a high degree of instability and the departure of nine participants out of 13, 38 meetings led to the project Les As du coeur, a cardiovascular health project offered through breakfast workshops. A self-service counter was slated to be added but was never implemented due to various problems.

Funding: Participation in the action groups was funded by Quebec's departments of income security, labour, and occupational training, through various employability programs (RADE, EXTRA, and PAIE) which offer additional income security payments in exchange for participation in training programs.

Social Capital

Sharing resources to attain collective objectives: The DSP provided its expertise and the partner community groups provided participants and space; while the participants gave their time, it is clear that there were few other resources to share.

Mobilizing external resources: Participants received higher income security payments for a few months. However, the institutional partners had not planned for long-term funding. This is a fairly typical project in this area (short-lived project with overly ambitious goals). The lack of resources became quickly apparent when designing the groups' projects, particularly the self-service counter initiative, which was never implemented).

Creating new resources: New resources were created (two groups, three projects); however, they were short-lived and had little impact in terms of the initial objectives. Improvement of cardiovascular health in the target neighbourhood, the key objective, seems to have been very limited following the creation of these groups. A few residents (not quantified) were enrolled in the smoking reduction (Cheminer sans fumer) and healthier eating (Bouffe à bons prix) projects. They stated that the initiatives reduced their isolation, expanded their knowledge and, in some cases, reduced their smoking (but did not stop it). The impact of the project initiated by Group 2 was negligible, because few of the activities actually got off the ground and very few citizens were enrolled. Moreover, in both cases, no permanent service to promote cardiovascular health was maintained in the community. In terms of employability, two participants in Group 2 benefited from a prolonged internship; however at the time of the evaluation, neither one planned to search for a job.

External recognition: Very few citizens participated in these short-lived projects.

Democratic dimensions: The project had significant democratic ambitions of individual and collective empowerment, but its effects were negligible given the high drop-out rate among participants and its very limited concrete results. The partnerships themselves collapsed at the end of what turned out to be fleeting projects.

Lessons to Be Learned

Initial conditions: This case study involves an institutional/mixed project. While it shares some of the features of the "failures" described above, such as the absence of a shared understanding of problems and needs, it also has its own characteristics. The DSP sought to respond to a major health problem, on the basis of general scientific studies, through a solution based on collective empowerment imposed from outside – a blatant contradiction in an of itself – which could only propose very limited solutions in reality (the opposite of the "Y" case). The DSP knew that it could not bypass community organizations, but the motivation of these organizations to join the partnership was not very clear (see below). As in the case of the karate classes, an initial, predefined project was put forward that lacked a solution-oriented approach. Instead, the project focused on an institutional approach that called on local partners to take charge of their situation and find solutions they would be ultimately responsible for implementing and sustaining. This was an unrealistic goal, which the partner community organizations did, in fact, recognize. In this context, the initial partners were certainly not in a position to control the various aspects of the project. Its success depended on a successful initial training stage, which revealed the weakness of the overall project design, given the high number of meetings required to make a decision (contrary to the Brownsburg case) and the high drop-out rate.

The DSP also failed to convince its future partners of the relevance of the project. However, this was secondary for the community organizations that were pursuing their own objectives: in Group 1, temporarily improving the lives of their members (through increased income), a common objective for organizations that participate in temporary employability programs; in Group 2, permanently improving the employment situation of their members, although this was not achieved.

The concept of involving food security organizations in a health project was based on a poor understanding of the actions of these groups (lobbying for food security) and the community's real needs. In fact, this was a case of misplaced priorities, resulting from a flawed use of research results (namely, confusing statistical correlations and causalities – not unprecedented in the world of research) leading to the development of projects that target the intermediate consequences (in this instance, gaps in knowledge about health or the capacity to eat well) rather than the causes, namely, poverty, chronic insecurity, and lack of resources, particularly, human capital. The literature does not refer to a similar (successful) experience that could have informed the process. Furthermore, the concept of collective empowerment is based on a philosophy of entrepreneurial development that is ill-suited to the characteristics of the participants and typical of projects seeking to create social capital in troubled communities that have no resources to share and mobilize.

Network structure: Despite appearances, this partnership was not a network, but rather a hierarchical structure with four levels (the DSP at the top, followed by the organizations, the members of the projects and, at the bottom, the potential users of the services to be created). Each level had a corresponding level of action: the DSP at the regional level, the organizations at the neighbourhood level, and the others at the individual level. The key members of the "network" were the members of the project, but they did not have the anticipated capacity to act (human capital). This kind of structure does not tend to generate power struggles or overlapping mandates among participants, but rather a tendency to work in parallel, pursuing their own objectives, with no regard for the objectives of the upper level (the DSP) other than to ensure access to the promised funding. There was no struggle for control over resources, since they were scarce and the external resources were allocated to specific expenses (income supplements). It is clear that no previous informal relations existed between the DSP and the community organizations involved. Ultimately, the partnership did not survive the experience.

Resources: Few resources were mobilized or produced. It seems clear that the project did not take into account the resources needed for its implementation. Moreover, expertise was poorly used (including scientific resources) and wasted on projects that lacked relevance, failing to address the genuine needs of a disadvantaged community.

6. A Positive Counter-Example: The Collaboration Between *Entraide bénévole* and the CLSC Armand-Frappier

In 1981, the community organization Entraide bénévole (EB) was created to offer home-care services to seniors, with the goal of reducing their social isolation, promoting their autonomy, and rebuilding a spirit of community. Working jointly with the Regroupement des organismes communautaires de St. Janvier (ROCSJ), various programs were gradually added. The EB belongs to several working groups in St. Janvier (food security, letter carriers alert program), and is well rooted in the community. Through the ROCSJ, the organization participated in the process that led to the creation of the CLSC in 1984. From its inception, the CLSC developed very close and respectful ties with community organizations. In an informal collaboration, the CLSC referred users to EB's Soutien à domicile (home support) and Bonjour quotidien (daily check-in) programs, while the EB offered home support services that complemented those provided by the CLSC. The CLSC's community worker also served as a resource person providing support and advice to the organization as needed, on various operational questions, including membership and relations with the public network. Until the early 1990s, she also served as an intermediary for referrals. Thereafter, she played more of an information and awareness-raising role among staff with respect to the organization's services, their limitations and the difference between volunteer/community services and public services. She also participated in the same working committees as the EB. The CLSC offers seniors technical and specialized services while the EB provides socio-emotional support through its volunteer corps. With the aging population, both partners were aware that they faced growing demands, which could, in the case of the CLSC, become overwhelming.

Funding: The CLSC primarily offered personnel time (about 10 percent of users of the Maintien à domicile program are referred to the EB). In the early 1990s, the EB was funded by United Way, private funds, self-financing, the regional health board, and the municipality, and benefited from the support of employment development programs (Article 25 and EXTRA).

Social Capital

Both partners are pursuing the objective of providing seniors in the municipality with various forms of support, which has been largely successful (at least at the time of the analysis). Indeed, the users expressed a high degree of satisfaction with the support services received. To attain this collective objective, the partners shared their expertise and services. The external resources mobilized provided base funding that ensured the continuity of the activities. Users of the CLSC's Maintien à domicile service had access to additional support from the EB's Soutien à domicile program (friendly visits and calls, accompaniment, transportation, caregiving, encouragement) and Bonjour quotidien (check-in service). These activities help to keep seniors who are losing their autonomy at home longer, thereby delaying their institutionalization. The EB volunteers gradually became important individuals in the lives of senior clients and contributed to their quality of life. The creation and maintenance of collective empowerment are processes that have been in place since the foundation of both organizations.

Lessons to Be Learned

Initial conditions: This is a genuine mixed case that is very widespread and represents a near perfect model of complementarity/collaboration between institutions and community organizations. This partnership worked, because it met all the required conditions. First, it was rooted in a very long and shared history. The EB was created with the specific goal of completing the home-care services available at the time (prior to the establishment of the CLSC), and the CLSC was created through community lobbying. Their long relationship was positively maintained through time, and the community organization enjoyed strong legitimacy in the community (which means it was not tempted to seek additional external recognition, as was the case in the partnership created to prevent the mistreatment of children in Case Study 4). The partners shared a common understanding of the needs of seniors in their community, as well as objectives and solutions. Contrary to all the preceding cases, this was not a short-term project, but rather a long-term initiative addressing a major issue with long-term solutions.

The partners controlled the key aspects of the project: expertise and services were primarily internal; the EB also relied on its volunteers. Both partners were convinced of the need to work together to achieve their respective goals and were sensitive to each other's needs, as exemplified by the professional and operational support provided to the EB by the CLSC, and the awareness-raising work conducted among CLSC staff with respect to the specificities of the community's dynamics. The concrete results of this alliance had been observable for a long time, which was a key factor in pursuing the collaboration. The partners also had to face certain challenges (such as the temporary absence of the community organizer, which required changes to the referral process and other adjustments), which they successfully overcame.

Network structure: This was a two-partner network. However, both partners frequently worked together and had established working ties with other groups. This is also a typical form of structuring ties within service networks. As in the Brownsburg case, this case was located in a small municipality, with partners operating on the same territorial scale. The network's operations were informal and collective based on mutual respect and long-standing personal relations. Mandates did not overlap, and there were no struggles for power or control over resources. The involvement of, and their direct ties with users testify to the openness of this network. Furthermore, the network enjoyed the benefits of a pivotal person, namely the CLSC's community organizer.

Resources: This is an exemplary model of smooth operations. Each partner enjoyed base funding (as in the case of the karate classes) guaranteeing the longevity of its activities. However, the model is vulnerable to budget cuts and changes in orientations in community program funding. The partners were well aware of this and were also concerned about the anticipated rise in demand for home-care services. This model is also vulnerable to changes in personnel that can erode the benefits of a collective memory. In short, this is an ideal model that is difficult to reproduce in its entirety for the purposes of short-term action, but easy to mobilize to implement short-term projects.

Notes

1 In fact, this evokes Bourdieu's use of social capital. He argued that the possession (i.e., legacy) of a lasting, relatively institutionalized network of relations helped to explain forms of social stratification and class domination, in contrast to a constructivist conception of a network of relations accessible to all, and designed to achieve specific objectives. Bourdieu thus reminds us that the presence of a network precedes the objective of mobilization, in opposition to Lin or Burt's instrumentalist argument.

2 In analyses of social capital, a distinction is made between school and diploma, between bank and money.

3 Structural analyses of social networks serve to describe today's social structures (Degenne and Forsé, 1994), which, among other things, are freer, more flexible and more horizontal. Analyses of what circulates within networks (relational analysis: Charbonneau, 2004) take into account these observations to describe the diversity of resources exchanged as well as the rules governing these exchanges, the first of which is that the circulation of resources serves primarily to create and maintain long-standing ties among individuals (Godbout, 2000; Mayer, 2003). Analyses that argue in terms of capital (and many works on social support influenced by social exchange theory), invert this rule, arguing that relations serve to mobilize resources. These analyses ignore the lessons that can be drawn from an examination of flexible, freely created networks that are redefined over time and tend to be horizontal; they focus instead on an organizational logic that defines these networks as fixed, permanent, vertical organizations that set objectives and, to attain them, mobilize existing resources, without explaining the conditions under which they are accessed. Any discussion of social capital must draw a nuance between personal resources (personal ties) and resources potentially accessible through these ties. This distinction between personal resources and resources through ties (Charbonneau and Turcotte, 2002; La Due Lake and Huckfeldt, 1998) requires an examination of the characteristics of the ties themselves (their history and quality) and not simply the characteristics of the individuals involved (such as their level of education or their occupation).

4 Some argue that social capital should be analyzed at this first level (Portes, 1998).

5 Of course, the utilitarian view would emphasize the fact that participation provides individuals with access to other individuals whose resources they may be able to use for their own ends. From a donation perspective, there is no denying this likely chain of donations and reciprocated donations, but the expectation of reciprocity is never the motive for participation, as confirmed by several studies on volunteer work (Godbout, 2000).

6 Some will be tempted to draw comparisons with the classification of social capital into three types, namely, bonding, bridging, and linking (Germain, 2004; Putnam, 2000; Taylor, 2004) and to conclude that this analysis does not concern the first type, but at least the second, in terms of ties that express a willingness to create bridges and, even more so, the third type in terms of ties between groups. Then there is Granovetter's distinction between strong and weak ties. However, we are critical of these classifications, as they do not take into account the dynamic evolution of relations over time. Even a situation initially defined by openness among groups can evolve into a situation of exclusiveness, as a number of authors have pointed out. We return to this in our conclusion.

7 This presentation is an ideal tool for those interested in applying this analytical approach to other cases.

8 For examples of step-by-step instructions, see Charbonneau (1999) and Dallaire et al. (2003).

9 Certain scientific journals present summaries of these reports (*Nouvelles pratiques sociales*, *Intervention*, *Revue organisations et territoires*, *Économie et solidarités*, PRISME).

10 While this remark may appear trite, this factor is often overlooked. In many cases, representatives are appointed in a context where other considerations take precedence over "quality."

11 For more on these debates and understanding the effects of choosing to become a member of a partnership, see Charbonneau (1999) or Dallaire et al. (2003).

12 For an example of child neglect, see Charbonneau (1999), which provides a comparative evaluation of three pilot projects conducted at the same time using the same proposed action, although adapted to local dynamics. The report ends with specific recommendations on the conditions necessary for the success of similar projects.

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Commentary on "Networks of Community Associations and Collective Social Capital: A Review of Analyses and Experiences"

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Exclusionary processes are strongly felt in Canadian communities where stocks of community social capital are non-existent or limited. A better understanding of how social capital at the community level is formed and the multiple factors explaining the successes or failures of projects aimed at developing this type of social capital are critical in improving the way we design, implement, and move forward social development goals at the community level.

The paper by Johanne Charbonneau takes a look at six Quebec community projects carried out with social development goals in mind, while tackling problems, such as youth gangs, violence and drug use, family violence, child abuse and neglect, and isolation of seniors. She analyzes social capital-related goals and outcomes of these projects from the perspective of the development of community networks (i.e., a grouping of groups). She argues against following a strict "instrumentalist" assessment of the projects (just outcomes) in favour of a more "interactionist" one (outcomes and process). She puts forward a definition of social capital that views social relations as the means or basis for mobilizing or creating new resources for community or collective well-being, not merely for the advancement of individual or group interests.

While successful community projects were found to be somewhat heterogeneous in terms of stakeholder interactions and collaborations (manifested in various partnerships, dialogues, and coalitions), Charbonneau identified several factors associated with their success: a common vision and understanding of the problem and required solutions, limited scope of action and setting of realistic objectives, respect for the logic already present in the local social networks, clear roles and mandates, legitimacy of leadership and sense of ownership, continuity in representation, and retention of control over resources. Among those related to community "embeddedness," the author mentions those associated with choosing the "right" persons (i.e., those who are knowledgeable and rooted in the social milieu), building on pre-existing informal relations within the community, and mastering the art of rallying organizational cultures of various community organizations.

Among the possible reasons for the failure of two community projects, the author lists the following factors: perceptions of the "enormity" of the challenge; and the great effort required to mobilize resources. These observations raise the question regarding the role of real and perceptual "thresholds" shared by stakeholders in determining the fate of projects aimed at developing community social capital.

The paper also focuses on the role of the federal government with respect to the formation or strengthening of community networks. Overall, the federal government is seen by the author as an important partner in terms of providing financial support and valuable expertise to the stakeholders. A list of general prescriptions to governments is then presented to ensure that community projects reach their intended goals. These prescriptions referred to the quality of government representation, with an emphasis on knowledge of community, continuity of representation, and decision-making authority; the types of community initiatives to be supported (i.e., those that contribute to the development of informal relations among community organizations and the strengthening of community networks); the role of government, mainly focused on what not to do, particularly the imposition of leadership, language, and preconceptions of what will work; and the type of funding that is necessary to ensure a stable source of external resources for community networks. The author also recommends the use of a social capital lens in developing social policy interventions within the federal government, which would also apply to different major and minor stakeholders participating in the community development process.

It should be noted that neither following Charbonneau's general prescriptions nor duly applying a social capital lens at every stage may necessarily bring stakeholders to a successful project. The specificity of the context in which projects are developed and implemented needs to be taken into account, as well as the fact that each project brings unique challenges to stakeholders. Even in cases where community resources are adequately mobilized and partners are rallied into a common front, project success is not 100 percent ensured. Extraneous factors, such as weak leadership, polarized group interests, and public indifference may bring projects to a halt. As the author admits, the best advice to stakeholders (including governments) is always to think "horizontally" and be flexible to adapt to local conditions.

In conclusion, these honest reflections by Charbonneau provide valuable insights into identifying the nature of the parameters, which increase the likelihood of project success. In doing so, it helps move us toward a better understanding of the means to achieve a higher level of community well-being. Social Development Canada recognizes Charbonneau's work in this field and welcomes the opportunity to be able to comment on this valuable paper on a subject that corresponds centrally with the Department's mandate.

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